

## Autodesk Exchange Apps: Guidelines and Requirements for Revit

This guide is for developers and content providers who are new to publishing plug-ins and other content on Autodesk® Exchange store --- either free, trial or for fee versions. It outlines best practice guidelines and a few requirements for publishers to follow when creating products to publish on Autodesk Exchange. These guidelines are designed to ensure that users on Autodesk Exchange have a consistent experience for the users when downloading multiple products from the store.

*Note: These are **DRAFT** guidelines – they may change during our product beta cycle based on feedback from our testers. Please revisit the ADN website regularly to ensure you have the most up to date version of this document. The finished version of this document will be published to the Developer Center or [www.autodesk.com/developapps](http://www.autodesk.com/developapps) after the release of our 2013 product lines.*

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## Overview

As mentioned earlier, we've developed the guidelines in this document for you to ensure Revit® users have a consistent experience when downloading content from the store. But we don't want to make it hard for you to publish your products. If you're finding it difficult to setup your plug-in or content according to the guidelines, please email us at [appsinfo@autodesk.com](mailto:appsinfo@autodesk.com). We'll be happy to help you.

We use a standard installer template to deploy content downloaded from the store. The ADN will be packaging up your apps using this installer template for you, and we'll let you know if any changes are required for your app to work with this mechanism.

## What Can I Publish?

You can publish pretty much anything to the Exchange store, e.g.:

- Plug-ins
- Standalone applications
- Content (e.g. Family Libraries)
- Books
- Training material

If it's something useful to a Revit 2013 user, then it's a candidate for the store. Ask us if you're not sure.

You can charge any price you like --- from free to thousands of dollars. You can also publish trial versions.

## How Do I Publish?

We'll be providing a fully online system for submitting your apps soon. In the meantime, please send your proposed apps to [AppSubmissions@autodesk.com](mailto:AppSubmissions@autodesk.com). When submitting your app, please also include a completed "Product Submissions – Required Information" form (the form can be downloaded from the ADN website).

## Requirements

You will be presented with a detailed list of requirements for publishing on Exchange when you first register to be a publisher (when the online submission system becomes available). The information that follows is a summary. If there are any differences, then the online Publisher Agreement takes precedence.

### *For All Content Types*

Most of the information we need from you is collected via the product submission form you complete when submitting your content. This includes gathering information to auto-generate a 'quick start' page in HTML that is included with the download of your product and viewable online. Other requirements are:

- **Compatibility:** Your product must be relevant to (and usable with) Revit 2013, and must run on any Windows operating system supported by Revit 2013. Your product may be compatible with any Revit 2013 based vertical application (i.e., Revit, Revit Architecture, Revit Structure, and Revit MEP). If not compatible with all Revit verticals, then please specify in your submission which it is compatible with.
- **HTML help page:** The information you provide to populate the standard, auto-generated HTML page must allow the user to quickly understand how to use your product. You can reference additional information (for example, additional help files posted on your website) from the standard HTML documentation. The auto-generated HTML page will be populated using information you provide when submitting your product to the store.
- **User privileges:** If you don't use the standard installer template we provide, or if your installer or product requires elevated user privileges (greater than a Windows 7 Standard User) to install, then this must be very clearly documented in the description of your product displayed on the store.
- **Ready to run:** Your product must be 'ready to go' as soon as it's installed. It must not require the user to manually copy or register files, or manually edit Revit settings (such as support paths).

- If you use a licensing system, then it must allow your product to run as soon as it is installed by the user. This means that your application allows either instant activation (e.g., online activation), or full functionality with a time-bombed 'grace period' that is long enough for you to send activation inform to the customer.
- **Product Stability:** Your product should be stable, and not behave or alter the behavior of Revit in a way that we deem unsuitable (for example, blocking standard Revit functionality, blocking the functionality of another plug-in, causing data loss, etc.).

## *Plug-ins*

Additional requirements for plug-ins are:

- You must use an **add-in manifest** as the loading mechanism.
- Your plug-in must include a **ribbon button** to access your main command. If your application has many buttons, you may also choose to have a separate custom ribbon tab.

## *Family Libraries*

Additional requirements for family libraries are:

- Your Family Library must include a ribbon button to the Revit ribbon bar. The ribbon bar UI must either provide access to the family library or launch a help file explaining how to access it. We'll explain this later in this document.
- Your family libraries (in rfa file format) must be installed in the following folder:

**Windows 7/Vista:** %PUBLIC%\Documents\Autodesk\Downloaded Content (typically C:\Users\Public\Documents\Autodesk\Downloaded Content).

**Windows XP:** %ALLUSERSPROFILE%\Documents\Autodesk\Downloaded Content (typically C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Documents\Autodesk\Downloaded Content)

Note: This is to be consistent with other Autodesk products - for a repeatable cross-product user experience (for example when using products in a Suite).

Again, we'll create the installer for you and we can help you modify your libraries so they work in this new location.

## *Standalone Applications and Other Content*

There are no additional requirements for products that are not integrated with Revit. If you wonder what kinds of products this might include – consider eBooks, video tutorials, industry specific calculators, connectors to Cloud based services and the like.

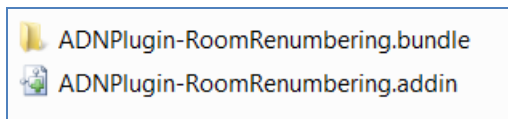
## Guidelines

### *Use of the Add-in Manifest*

We'll be using per-user location to place the add-in manifest:

%appdata%\Autodesk\Revit\Addins\2013

You place your add-in manifest file in this location. You will also place a folder containing your other plugin-in files in the same location. The name of the folder containing your plug-in files must end with the text '.bundle'. Like this:



The Add-in manifest accepts relative path in the <Assembly/> tag:

```
<Assembly>.\ADNPlugin-RoomRenumbering.bundle\ADNPlugin-RoomRenumbering.dll</Assembly>
```

in this way, your plug-in can be simply installed by copying files without requiring the add-in manifest to be modified during installation

You can also download some of the free plug-ins already available on Autodesk Exchange and study their format. For example, the following ADN Plugins of the Month are currently available:

- Ashrae Viewer
- Filer Upgrader
- String Search
- Wall Opening Area

### *Use a Registered Developer Symbol*

We strongly recommend you prefix your filenames with your Registered Developer Symbol (RDS) to avoid potential naming conflict with other plug-ins. You can reserve an RDS for free at [www.autodesk.com/symbolreg](http://www.autodesk.com/symbolreg). (If you don't use an RDS, and your plug-in files clash with another plug-in, then we will ask you to rename your files).

This applies to content (such as family libraries) as well as plug-in modules.

### *Use the Ribbon*

Using ribbon elements for your application is required, but how you do this will depend on your plug-in design. As a minimum, every plug-in or family library must add a panel to the 'Add-Ins' tab that either invokes the main command defined by the plug-in or displays a help file explaining how to use the family library.

However, if your plug-in defines more than one command, then you will have to create ribbon layout for your plug-in in a way that is most helpful to the user (for example, using large buttons for most frequently used commands and smaller buttons for less used commands).

- Plug-ins that install a single panel should normally add that panel to the 'Add-Ins' tab.
- Plug-ins that creates several ribbon Bar panels may prefer to create a new tab specific to that Plug-In (and normally with the Tab name being the name of the Plug-in).

### *Use the Contextual Help (F1 Help) with Ribbon Item*

Contextual or F1 Help support is a new feature in Revit 2013. See `RibbonItem.SetContextualHelp()` method and `ContextualHelp` class. Plug-in of the Month sample application posted to the store site implement F1 help, too.

We encourage you to use a help mechanism that is consistent with the Revit help, such as tooltips and contextual help placed on a ribbon item. The options supported for contextual help can be linking to an external URL, launching a locally installed help file, or linking to a topic on the Autodesk help wiki.

### **More Information**

The ADN team is here to help you be a successful publisher on Autodesk Exchange. We'll do whatever we can to help you. You are welcome to email [appsinfo@autodesk.com](mailto:appsinfo@autodesk.com) if you have any further questions after reviewing these guidelines and the other documentation on [www.autodesk.com/developapps](http://www.autodesk.com/developapps).

Thank you for participating on the Revit Exchange store.

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