

Microsoft South Africa

Hands on Lab



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Part 1: Hands on Lab

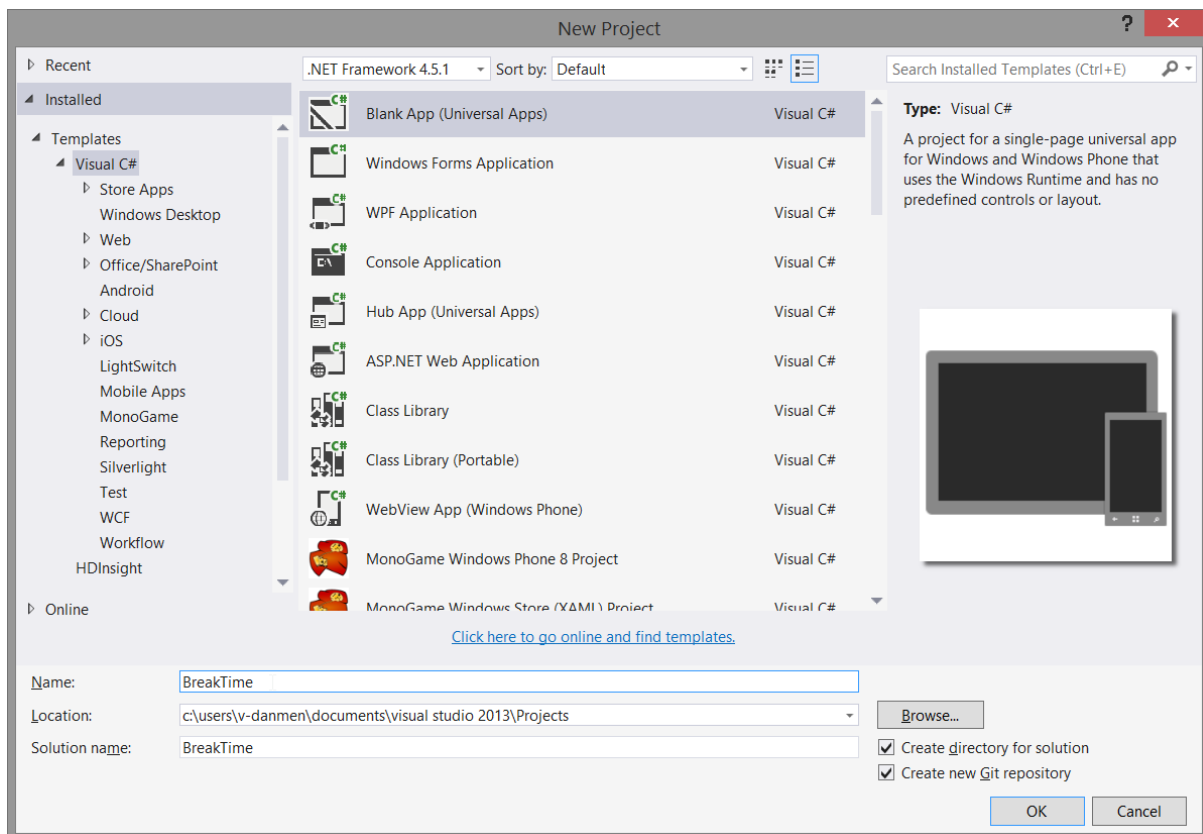
Building your first App for Windows 8.1 and publishing it to the Windows Store

The sample throughout this manual will be a break timer app for students to set times between 2 break periods and a home time and display a countdown timer to the next break and until home time. We call this app “BreakTime” App, but your app should be personal, tailored to a specific problem you want to address.

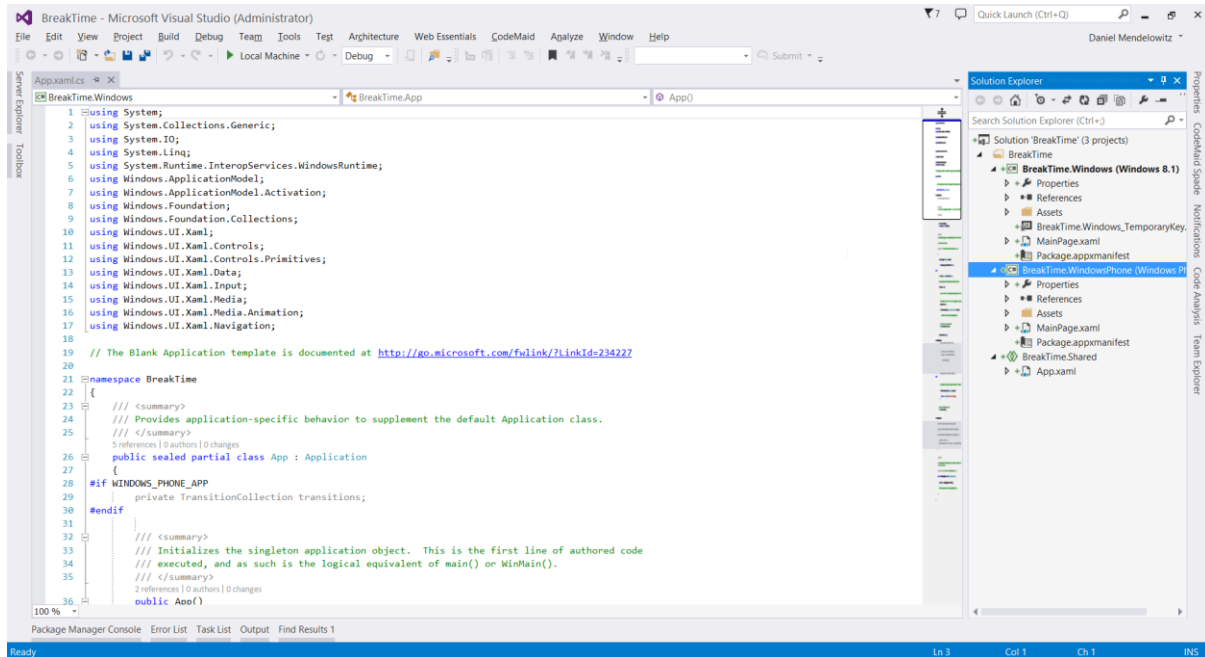
Project Setup

Create a new project by either going to “File > New > Project”, or by clicking “New Project” on the Visual Studio start page.

Select “Blank App (Universal)” and change the project name to “BreakTime”. Uncheck “Add to source control/create git repository” if you want. Then click OK to create the project.



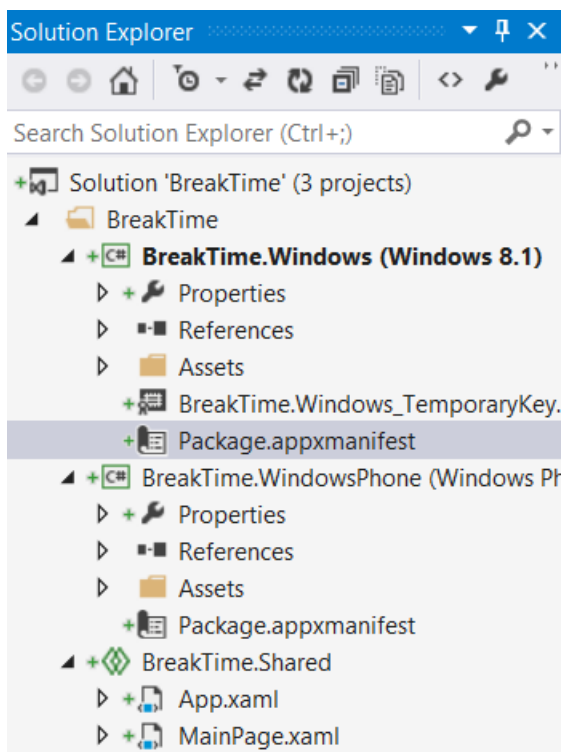
After Visual Studio finishes initializing the project, you should be presented with App.xaml.cs open in a new tab. On the side, you should see a tab labeled “Solution Explorer”. If not, go to “View > Solution Explorer” in the top menu.



Setup the Main Page

Firstly, we will move one of the MainPage.xaml files into the BreakTime.Shared namespace. You can copy either the .Windows or .WindowsPhone MainPage files as they are both identical. Once MainPage.xaml is under the “.Shared” NameSpace, delete the MainPage files under both “Windows” and “WindowsPhone” namespaces, otherwise the project will not build.

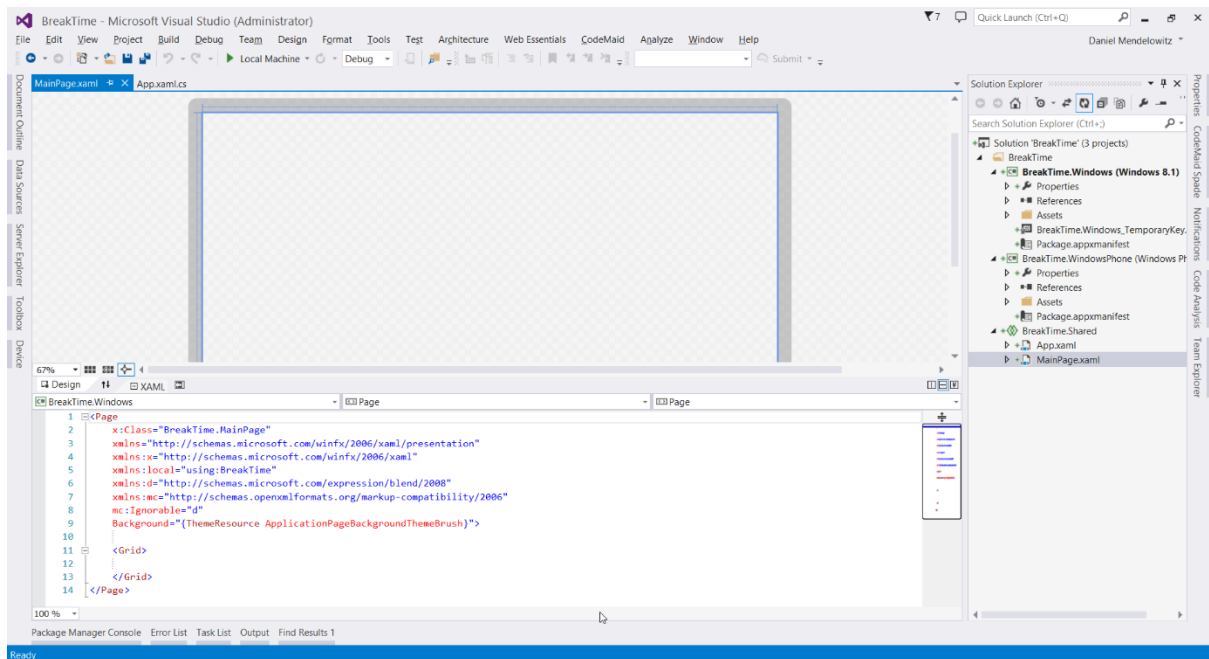
Your Solution Explorer should look like this:



By placing MainPage.xaml in the Shared Namespace, we can create the GUI and write the code only once for both Phone and Desktop.

Creating the Main GUI

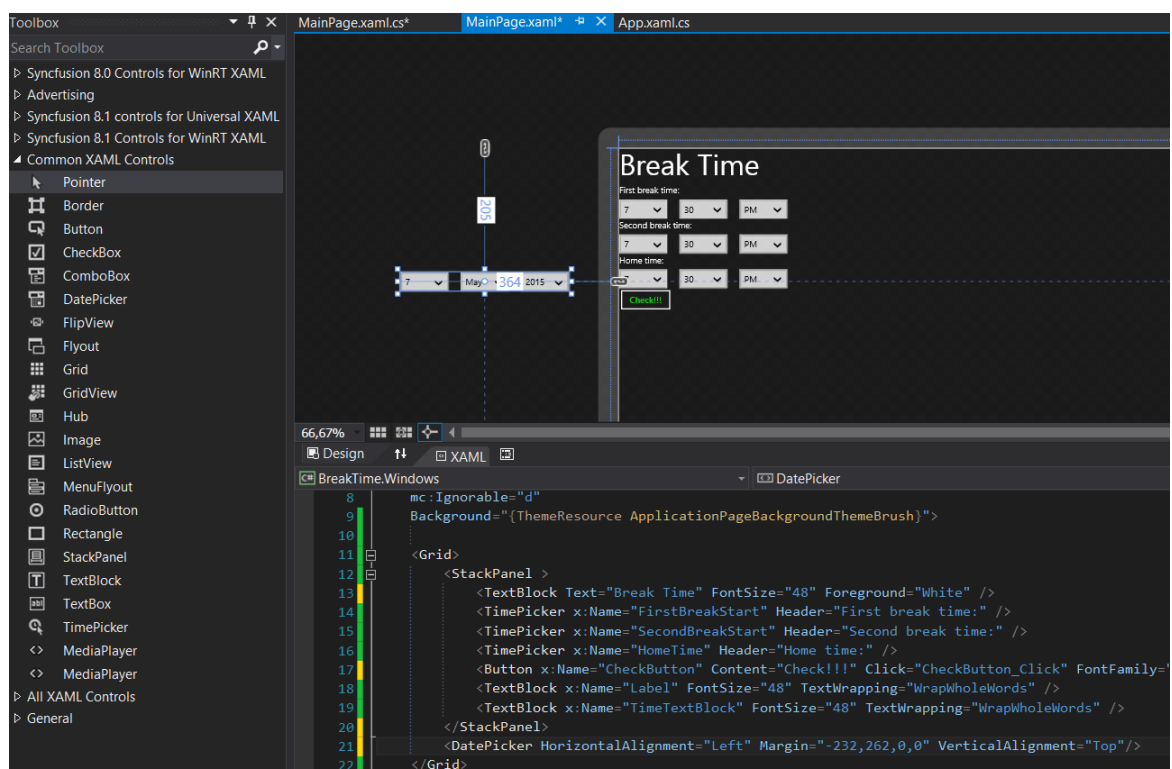
Once MainPage.xaml is moved, open it by double-clicking on it. This should load a split view showing the XAML code next to a Designer preview.



Open The Toolbox Tab (View > Toolbox) to open the controls toolbox, which contains several built in controls.

You can drag controls into the design view using the toolbox:

For this demo, we will utilize the “Button”, “DatePicker”, “StackPanel” and “Text Block” controls.



You can drag elements onto the design view and position them using the position controls

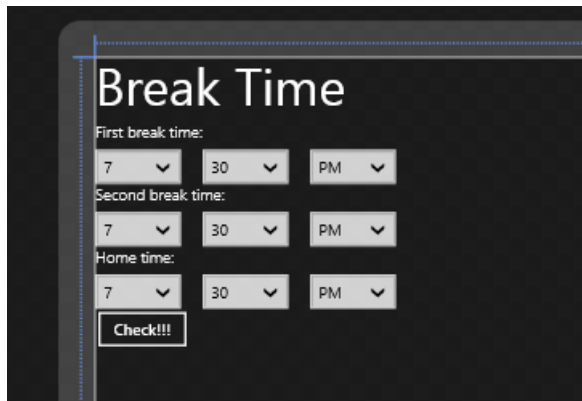
Drag the above controls into your designer window similar to as shown above. Notice that the XAML page updates as you add and manipulate controls.

You can alternatively directly edit the XAML code.

The following code is the minimal code required for the app to work.

```
<StackPanel >
    <TextBlock Text="Break Time" FontSize="48" />
    <TimePicker x:Name="FirstBreakStart" Header="First break time:" />
    <TimePicker x:Name="SecondBreakStart" Header="Second break time:" />
    <TimePicker x:Name="HomeTime" Header="Home time:" />
    <Button x:Name="CheckButton" Content="Check!!!" Click="CheckButton_Click" />
    <TextBlock x:Name="Label" FontSize="48" TextWrapping="WrapWholeWords" />
    <TextBlock x:Name="TimeTextBlock" FontSize="48" TextWrapping="WrapWholeWords"/>
</StackPanel>
```

Your designer view should now look something like this



We use a <StackPanel> to layout our controls vertically without needing to drag each individual element into position.

Inside the StackPanel, We have several control types:

- The first <TextBlock> element, labelled “Break Time” has a font size of 48 and acts as a header to display the app name. You can change the font size in the properties pane or in XAML.
- We have 3 <TimePicker> Elements, each with a label for first and second break, and home time.
The <TimePicker> allows us to set the Hour and Minute values as well as AM/PM for our break/home times.
- The <Button> named “CheckButton” which we will use to begin calculations.
- Underneath the Check button are 2 <TextBlock> elements, named “Label” and “TimeTextBlock” which we will use to display messages to the user.

We can also select elements in the designer view and edit their properties and events.

Click on the “Check!!!” button so it is highlighted like this:



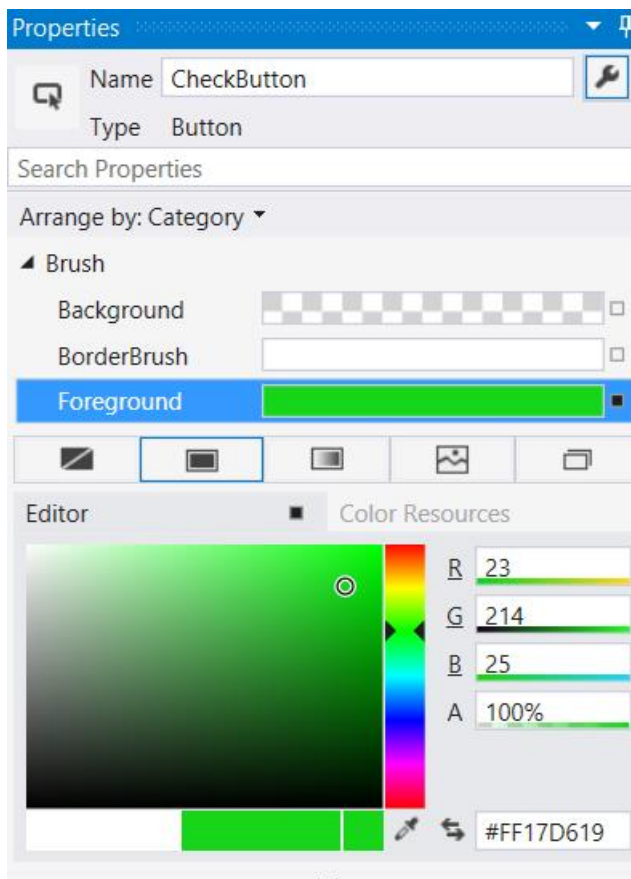
If a properties pane does not show, go to View > Properties Window

The properties pane shows all the properties that are able to be applied to the selected UI object.

You can see that the Button has a Name, “CheckBox” which corresponds to the “x:Name” property of the Button in the XAML.

Changing the properties of an element on the pane will update the values in the XAML to reflect them. Let’s change the colour of the button. In the properties view, click the “Brush” dropdown. This will open the brush editor.

Change the foreground colour of the button using a colour picker. You can also make a gradient between two colours or even use an image as a background



Notice that when you changed the colour in properties, the <Button> tag in the XAML updated with a Foreground attribute.

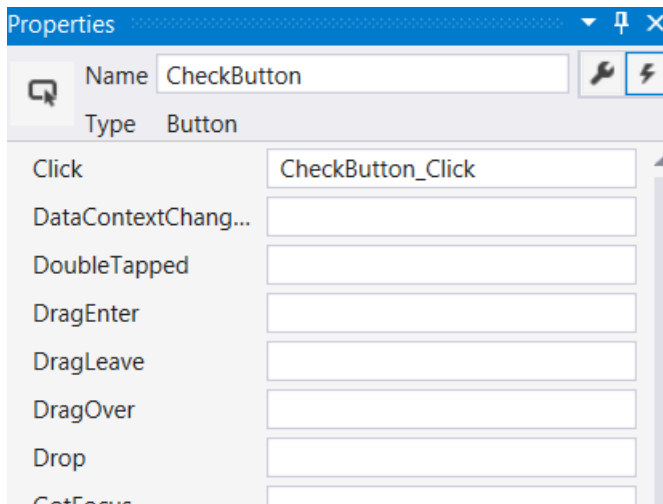
Let’s make the font size of the topmost TextBlock (“Break Time”) slightly smaller. In the properties pane, open the

Adding Code

Note the Wrench and Lightning bolt icons in the top corner of the properties pane.



Clicking the wrench icon will show the properties view, while the lightning bolt switches to the events view. Open the events for the button.



We can see a list of Event names with blank textboxes with the exception of the “Click” event which has a name of “CheckBox_Click” which is the name of the method called when the button is clicked.

Double-click inside the textbox of the Click event. Doing so will create an empty CheckBox_Click event method to the MainPage.xaml.cs file. This file is called the “Code Behind” the XAML and is used to run methods on the MainPage. You can also open the code behind by right clicking on MainPage.xaml and select “View Code”. The code behind will look something like this:


```

33  /// Invoked when this page is about to be displayed in a Frame.
34  /// </summary>
35  /// <param name="e">Event data that describes how this page was reached.
36  /// This parameter is typically used to configure the page.</param>
37  protected override void OnNavigatedTo(NavigationEventArgs e)
38  {
39      // TODO: Prepare page for display here.
40
41      // TODO: If your application contains multiple pages, ensure that you are
42      // handling the hardware Back button by registering for the
43      // Windows.Phone.UI.Input.HardwareButtons.BackPressed event.
44      // If you are using the NavigationHelper provided by some templates,
45      // this event is handled for you.
46  }
47
48  private void CheckButton_Click(object sender, RoutedEventArgs e)
49  {
50  }
51  }
52
53
54

```

It's time to write some logic for the app.

The `_Click` method is currently empty. We will come back to it after we write some other initialisation code. Scroll to the top of the code file, and above the public `MainPage()` method, type the following code.

```

public sealed partial class MainPage : Page
{
    //private instance fields
    private DispatcherTimer timer = new DispatcherTimer();
    private TimeSpan firstBreakStartTime;
    private TimeSpan secondBreakStartTime;
    private TimeSpan homeTime;
    private TimeSpan now;

    public MainPage()

```

`DispatcherTimer timer` will be used like a stopwatch to count down to break/home time.

The 4 `TimeSpan` variables will be used to store the times for 1st, 2nd, and home times from the `TimePicker` controls, as well as the current time (`now`).

Inside the MainPage() method, add the following code. This will initialise the variables we just declared:

```
public MainPage()
{
    this.InitializeComponent();

    this.NavigationCacheMode = NavigationCacheMode.Required;

    firstBreakStartTime = FirstBreakStart.Time;
    secondBreakStartTime = SecondBreakStart.Time;
    homeTime = HomeTime.Time;
    now = DateTime.Now.TimeOfDay;
}
```

We assign the TimeSpans to each TimePicker.Time values as well as DateTime.Now.TimeOfDay. We can now use these values to calculate the time until break/home time.

We will now create a few helper methods to perform calculations with the TimeSpan type and to show text to the user.

```
public void TimeTrimmer(TimeSpan timeDifference)
{
    if (timeDifference < TimeSpan.FromMinutes(1))
    {
        TimeTextBlock.Text = timeDifference.Seconds.ToString() + "s";
    }
    if (timeDifference < TimeSpan.FromHours(1) && timeDifference >
        TimeSpan.FromMinutes(1))
    {
        TimeTextBlock.Text = timeDifference.Minutes.ToString() + "m" +
            timeDifference.Seconds.ToString() + "s";
    }
    if (timeDifference < TimeSpan.FromDays(1) && timeDifference >
        TimeSpan.FromHours(1))
    {
        TimeTextBlock.Text = timeDifference.Hours.ToString() + "h" +
            timeDifference.Minutes.ToString() + "m" + timeDifference.Seconds.ToString() + "s";
    }
}
```

The TimeTrimmer method takes into account whether the time until break/home time is less than 1 hour or 1 minute and will only display the smallest time, instead of 0h0m30s, it will just show 30s. It will also display a message if it is exactly break or exactly home time.

The next method, Each_Tick will check how long the current time (now) is to the next time.

```
private void Each_Tick(object sender, object e)
{
    //First break
    var firstBreakStartTime = FirstBreakStart.Time;
    var firstBreakEndTime = firstBreakStartTime + TimeSpan.FromSeconds(10);

    //Second break
    var secondBreakStartTime = SecondBreakStart.Time;
    var secondBreakEndTime = secondBreakStartTime + TimeSpan.FromSeconds(10);

    //Home time
    var homeTime = HomeTime.Time;

    //Time right now
```

```

var now = DateTime.Now.TimeOfDay;

var timeDifference = TimeSpan.Zero;

if (now < firstBreakStartTime)
{
    timeDifference = firstBreakStartTime - now;
    Label.Text = "First break in...";
    TimeTrimmer(timeDifference);
}
if (now > firstBreakStartTime && now < firstBreakEndTime)
{
    Label.Text = "Yay!";
    TimeTextBlock.Text = "It is now first break!!";
}
if (now > firstBreakEndTime && now < secondBreakStartTime)
{
    timeDifference = secondBreakStartTime - now;
    Label.Text = "Second break in...";
    TimeTrimmer(timeDifference);
}
if (now > secondBreakStartTime && now < secondBreakEndTime)
{
    Label.Text = "Yay!";
    TimeTextBlock.Text = "It is now second break!!";
}
if (now > secondBreakEndTime && now < homeTime)
{
    timeDifference = homeTime - now;
    Label.Text = "Home time in...";
    TimeTrimmer(timeDifference);
}
if (now > homeTime)
{
    Label.Text = "HEY!";
    TimeTextBlock.Text = "Shouldn't you be home already??";
}
}

```

This sets our timer to call `Each_Tick` every second. We also want to be able to update the display each time the timer ticks. To do this, we add an event delegate to `Each_Tick` every time the `timer.Tick` function is called.

We want to call `Each_Tick` once per second so that our UI will update the countdown. Back in our `MainPage()` method, add the following:

```

public MainPage()
{
    this.InitializeComponent();

    this.NavigationCacheMode = NavigationCacheMode.Required;

    firstBreakStartTime = FirstBreakStart.Time;
    secondBreakStartTime = SecondBreakStart.Time;
    homeTime = HomeTime.Time;
    now = DateTime.Now.TimeOfDay;
    timer.Interval = new TimeSpan(0, 0, 0, 1);
    timer.Tick += Each_Tick
}

```

We are nearly done with part 1. Let's go back to the CheckButton_Click method. What we want to happen is that when the CheckButton is pressed, the timer starts and ticks once per second.

We do this by simply adding timer.Start() to the Click method:

```
private void CheckButton_Click(object sender, RoutedEventArgs e)
{
    timer.Start();
}
```

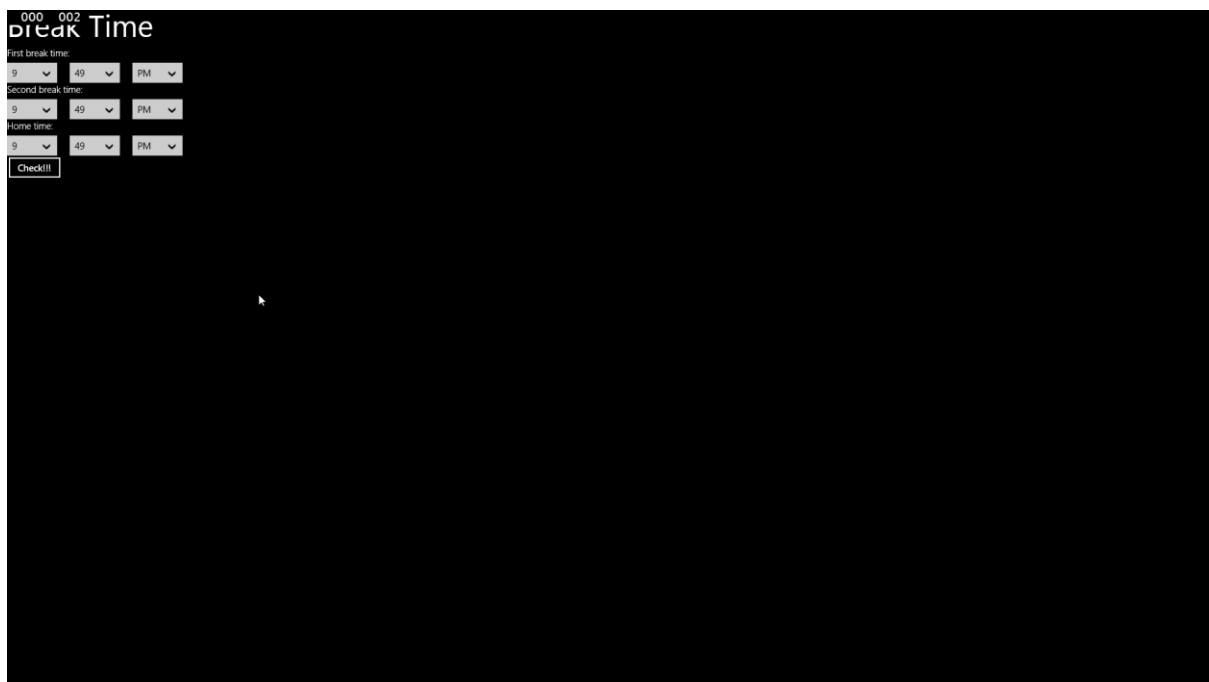
The App is nearly done!

Debugging the App

We will start by running the application on Windows 8.1. In solution explorer, right click the BreakTime.Windows Namespace and select "Set as Startup Project".

Let's run the app now. On the menu, go to Build > Build Solution, or hit F6 to build the project. Once the build completes without errors you can debug the application by pressing F5 or on the menu, Debug > Start Debugging.

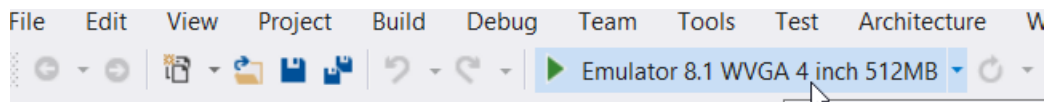
The Windows app will open and you should see this:



Change the values of the Time Pickers. When we click the Check!!! button, the TextBlock elements will show either a message, or a countdown to the nearest time!!!

Congratulations, you've written a simple Windows app! With Universal Apps, we can write a single UI layout that will work on Windows Phone, Windows 8, and soon, Windows 10 and Xbox One.

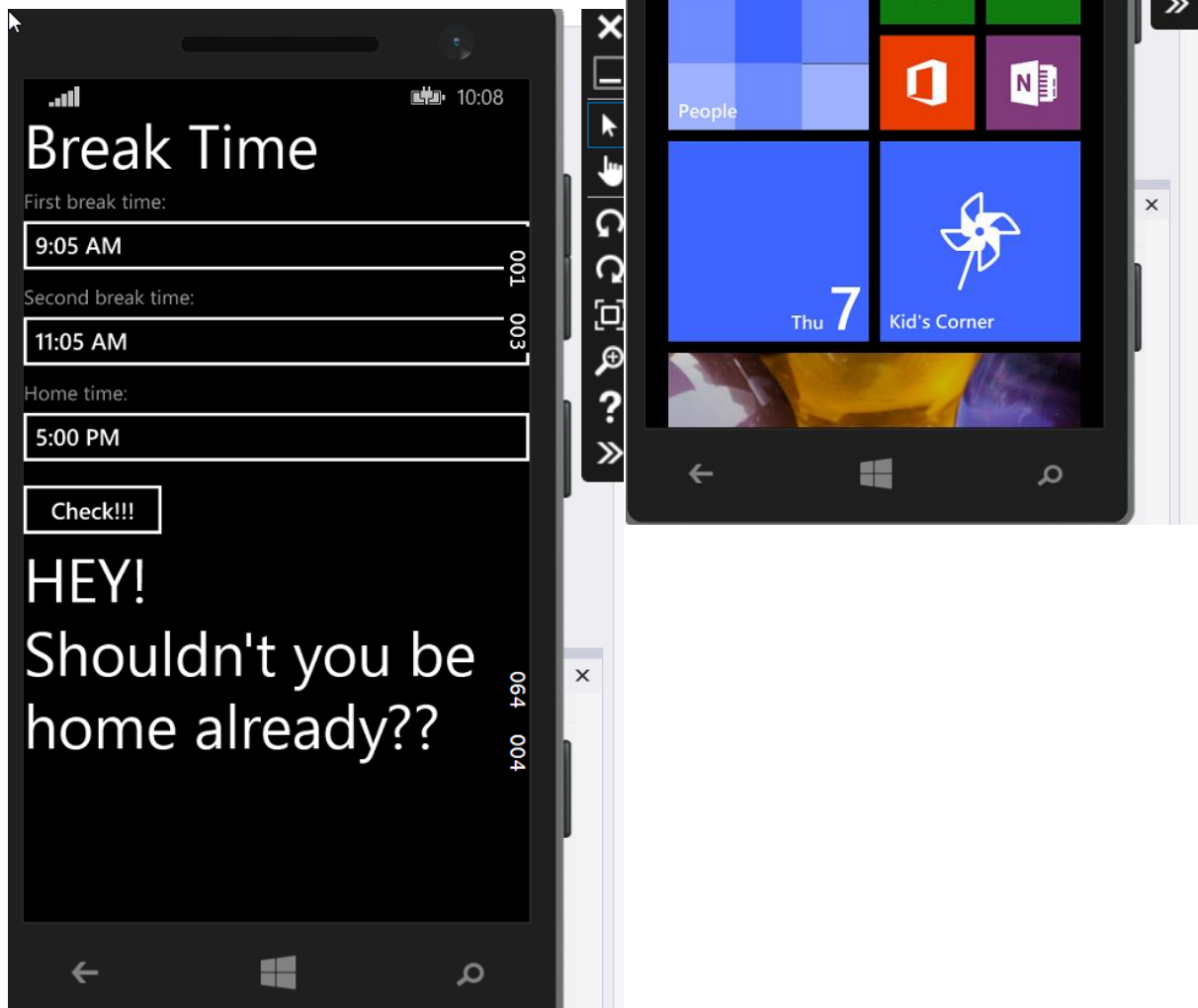
We can preview how the app will look on Windows Phone using the Phone Emulator, included with Visual Studio 2013 Community Edition. To run the app on the phone emulator, we must switch the startup project to BreakTime.WindowsPhone by right clicking the namespace and selecting "Set as Startup Project". On the top menu bar, there should be a green "play" button labelled "Emulator 8.1 WVGA 4 inch 512MB" if not, select it from the dropdown menu next to the button.



Clicking this, or pressing F5 will start the Windows Phone Emulator. The emulator takes some time to start up as it is loading a full Windows Phone 8.1 OS inside a managed virtual machine.

The emulator window will open to the start screen while Visual Studio deploys the built app to the device. When the app launches, it will show the exact same controls we saw on the Windows 8.1 app.

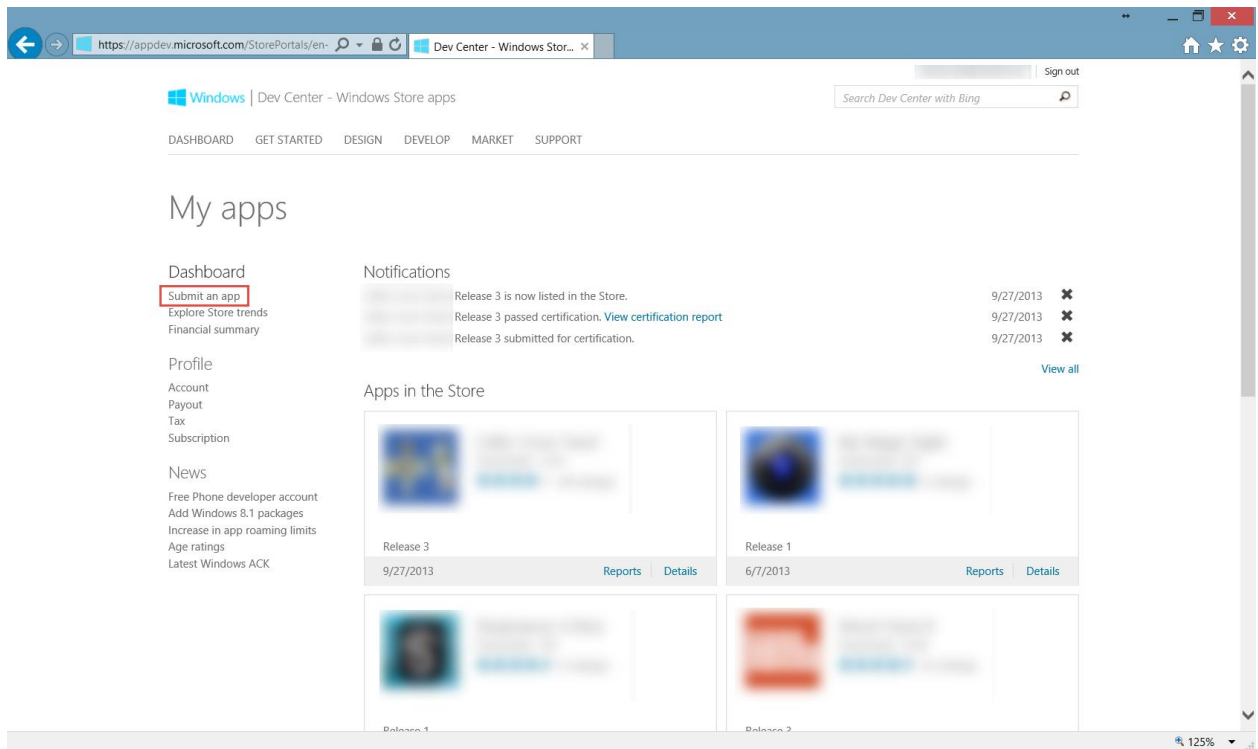
We have now created a universal app that can run on multiple platforms!



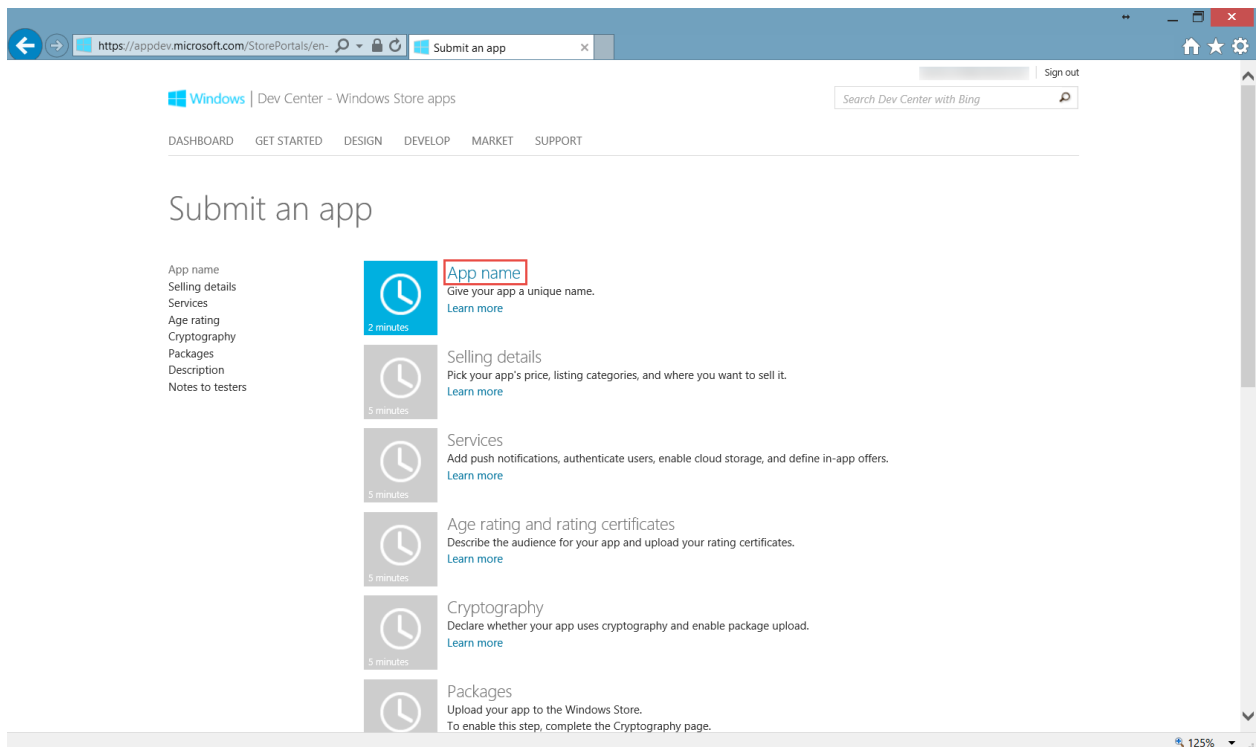
Part 2: Publishing your app to the store

Reserving the App name in the Windows Store

Head over to the Windows Developer Center <http://dev.windows.com> and click on the “Dashboard” link. Log in using your Microsoft ID that you have used to set up your Dev Center account. You should see a page similar to the following.



Click on the “Submit an app” link.

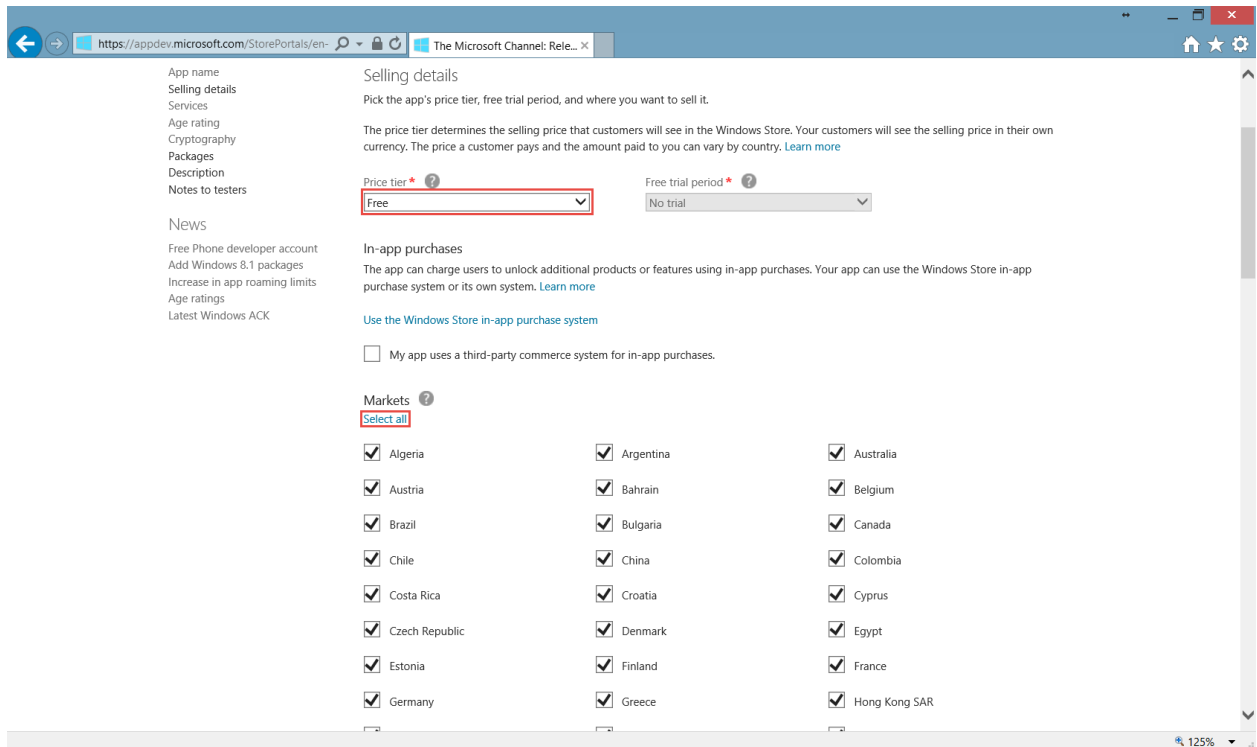


First let's just reserve a name for our app. Click on "App name" and Type a name that fits/suits **your own** channel selection. For the test app in this manual, I chose "Break Time!".

Once you have reserved the name of your app, note it as well as we will use it later in our app.

Selling Details

Select a price tier, I recommend offering this app for "Free". As we created our app in English, it's possible to publish it to all markets around the globe. If you would like to do so, you can simply click the "Select all" link under "Markets". If the YouTube channel you chose contains any references to gambling, alcohol, inappropriate humor or other adult content, the app may not pass certification in some Asian markets. In this case, you may want to restrict the markets to which you publish.



The screenshot shows the 'Selling details' page in the Microsoft Store app submission portal. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with options: App name, Selling details (selected), Services, Age rating, Cryptography, Packages, Description, Notes to testers, and News. Below the menu are links for 'Free Phone developer account', 'Add Windows 8.1 packages', 'Increase in app roaming limits', 'Age ratings', and 'Latest Windows ACK'.

The main content area is titled 'Selling details' and includes the following sections:

- Price tier:** A dropdown menu set to 'Free'.
- Free trial period:** A dropdown menu set to 'No trial'.
- In-app purchases:** A section explaining that the app can charge users to unlock additional products or features using in-app purchases. It includes a link to 'Use the Windows Store in-app purchase system' and a checkbox labeled 'My app uses a third-party commerce system for in-app purchases'.
- Markets:** A section with a 'Select all' link and a list of countries with checkboxes. All countries listed are checked:

Algeria	Argentina	Australia
Austria	Bahrain	Belgium
Brazil	Bulgaria	Canada
Chile	China	Colombia
Costa Rica	Croatia	Cyprus
Czech Republic	Denmark	Egypt
Estonia	Finland	France
Germany	Greece	Hong Kong SAR

Set a category and subcategory. I chose "Music & Video" and "Video" as a good match for our app.

Release my app as soon as it passes certification.

☐ No sooner than / /
at GMT (Lisbon, London, Casablanca)

Certification or publication delays might cause your app to be released after this date.

App category and subcategories
The Category and Subcategory determine where the app will be listed in the Store. [Learn more](#)

Category [?]

Subcategory [?]

Hardware requirements
We want users to have the best experience possible when they install your app. Let us know if your app requires a minimum DirectX feature level, or if it needs a certain amount of RAM. Only users that meet these requirements can download your app. While this information might limit how many people can download your app, it also helps you avoid poor ratings caused by users who install your app on a system that falls below your minimum requirements.
If your app supports ARM, you must select the All Systems option for DirectX.

Minimum DirectX feature level

Minimum system RAM

Accessibility

☐ This app has been tested to meet accessibility guidelines, and should be shown to people who are specifically looking for apps that meet those guidelines. [Learn more](#)

Services

There is no need to change anything in the “Services” page. We don’t offer any In-App-Purchases.

The Microsoft Channel: Release 1

App name
Selling details
Services
Age rating
Cryptography
Packages
Description
Notes to testers

News
Free Phone developer account
Add Windows 8.1 packages
Increase in app roaming limits
Age ratings
Latest Windows ACK

Services
Add services to bring connected, integrated experiences to your app and make it more engaging, dynamic, and appealing to your customers. You can also provide in-app offers to let customers make additional purchases from within your app.

Windows Azure Mobile Services
You can use Mobile Services to send push notifications, authenticate and manage app users, and store app data in the cloud. [Learn more](#)
[Sign in](#) to your Windows Azure account. Or [sign up](#) now to add services to up to ten apps for free.
If you have an existing WNS solution or need to update your current client secret, visit the [Live Services site](#).

In-app offers
You can use in-app offers to sell additional features and products for this app through the Windows Store. [Learn more](#)
Enter a unique product ID for each offer. The product ID is the internal reference to the offer that you use in the app's program code. Your customers won't see the product ID, but they will see the offer's description that you enter on the Description page later.
You can't change or delete product IDs after you submit the app for certification.

Product ID Price tier [?] Product lifetime [?] Content type

[Add another offer](#)

[Save](#)

Age Rating

Selecting “12+” in the age rating is a good choice for “normal” apps that aren’t specifically targeted for children. If you select a lower age rating, the app will be tested against different criteria to make sure it’s suitable for younger children. If your app contains graphic violence however, you will want to set the age rating higher.

The screenshot shows the 'Age rating and rating certificates' page in the Microsoft Store app submission portal. The left sidebar contains navigation links: App name, Selling details, Services, Age rating, Cryptography, Packages, Description, Notes to testers, News, Free Phone developer account, Add Windows 8.1 packages, Increase in app roaming limits, Age ratings, and Latest Windows ACK. The main content area is titled 'Age rating and rating certificates' and includes a 'Learn more' link. It explains that the Windows Store uses age ratings to help customers find apps suitable for their needs. It recommends choosing the 3+ or 7+ rating for children's apps. Five radio button options are listed: 3+ Suitable for young children, 7+ Suitable for ages 7 and older, 12+ Suitable for ages 12 and older (selected), 16+ Suitable for ages 16 and older, and 18+ Suitable for adults only. Each option has a detailed description of the content restrictions. At the bottom, it states that the Windows Store doesn't list apps intended for an adults only audience unless they are games, rated by a third party, or comply with all Windows content policies.

Cryptography

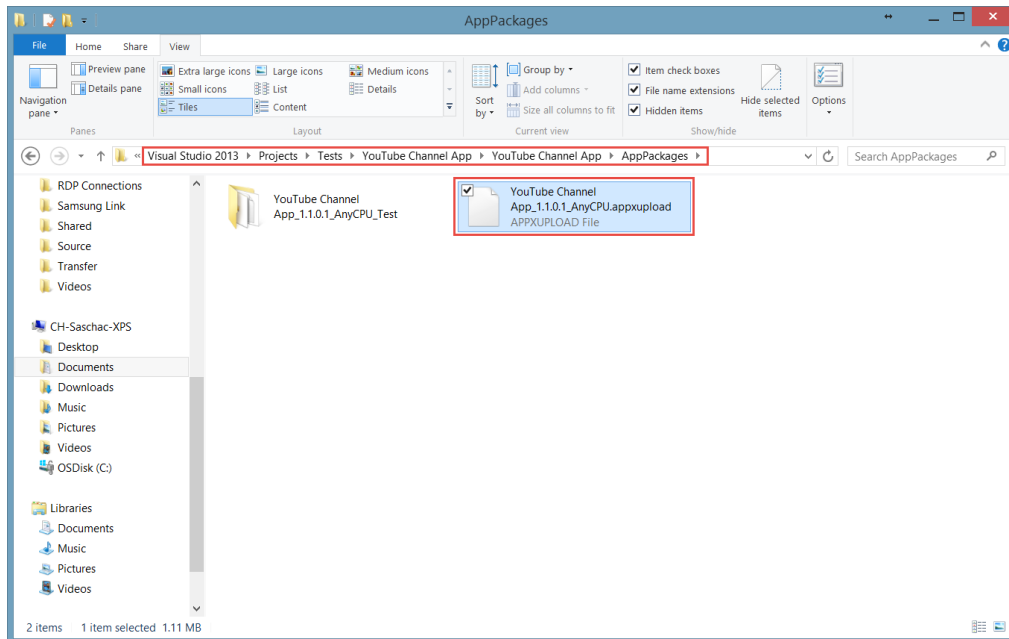
As our app doesn't make use of any cryptographic libraries or functions, answer the question with "No" and confirm by selecting the checkbox.

The screenshot shows the 'Cryptography' page in the Microsoft Store app submission portal. The left sidebar is identical to the previous page. The main content area is titled 'Cryptography' and includes a 'Learn more' link. It explains that the page describes how the app uses cryptography and encryption. It lists several examples of how an app might apply cryptography or encryption: Any use of a digital signature such as authentication or integrity checking, Encryption of any data or files that your app uses or accesses, Key management, certificate management, or anything that interacts with a public key infrastructure, Using a secure communication channel such as NTLM, Kerberos, Secure Sockets Layer (SSL), or Transport Layer Security (TLS), Encrypting passwords or other forms of information security, Copy protection or digital rights management (DRM), and Antivirus protection. It also states that the app is considered to use encryption even if another entity performs the encryption, such as the operating system, an external library, a third-party product, or a cryptographic processor. A question is asked: 'Does this app call, support, contain, or use cryptography or encryption?'. The 'No' radio button is selected. Below this, a checkbox is checked, indicating confirmation that the app is widely distributable to all jurisdictions without government review, approval, license or technology-based restriction. At the bottom, there is a 'Save' button and a link to the Bureau of Industry and Security website for more information on encryption controls.

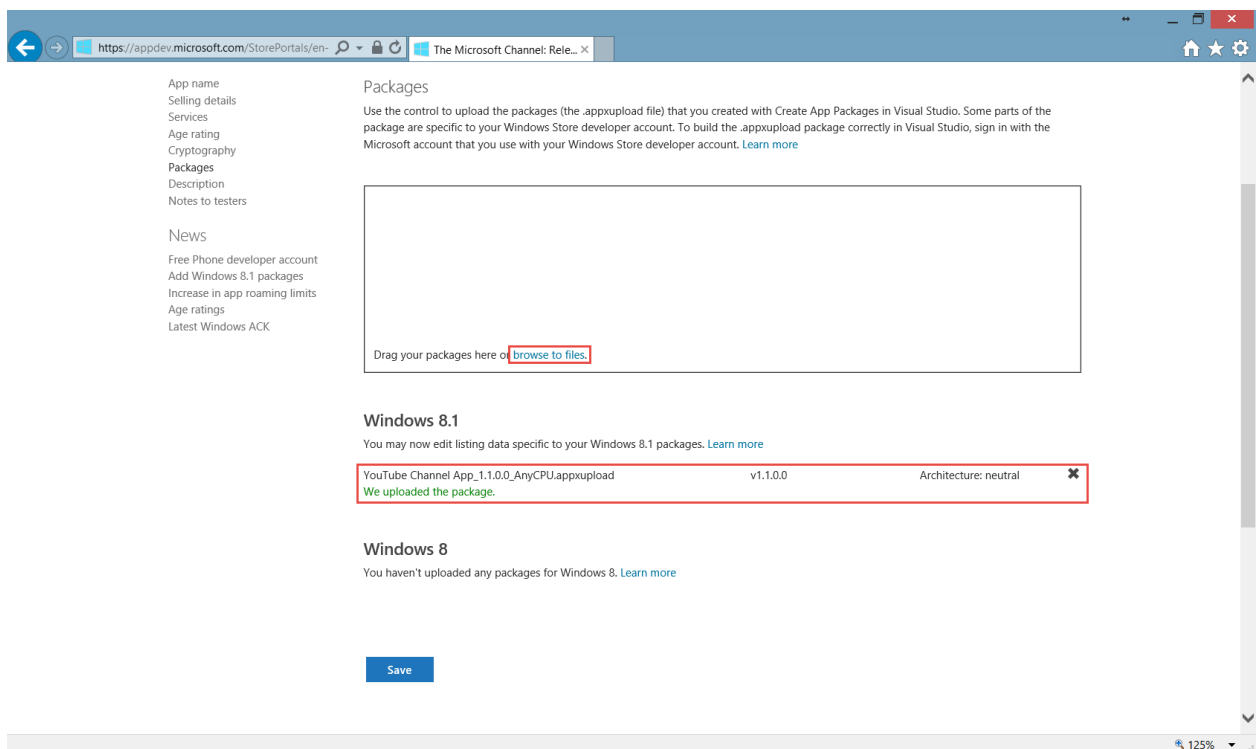
Packages

In here we upload our app package generated by Visual Studio. Click the "browse to files" link and point to the folder "AppPackages" inside your Visual Studio solution. This folder has been generated when we created the package and you will find a .appxupload file for each version/app package we have created.

Pick the latest .appxupload file. You can ignore the folder with the same name as the package, it is only used if you want to share your app with someone for testing it.



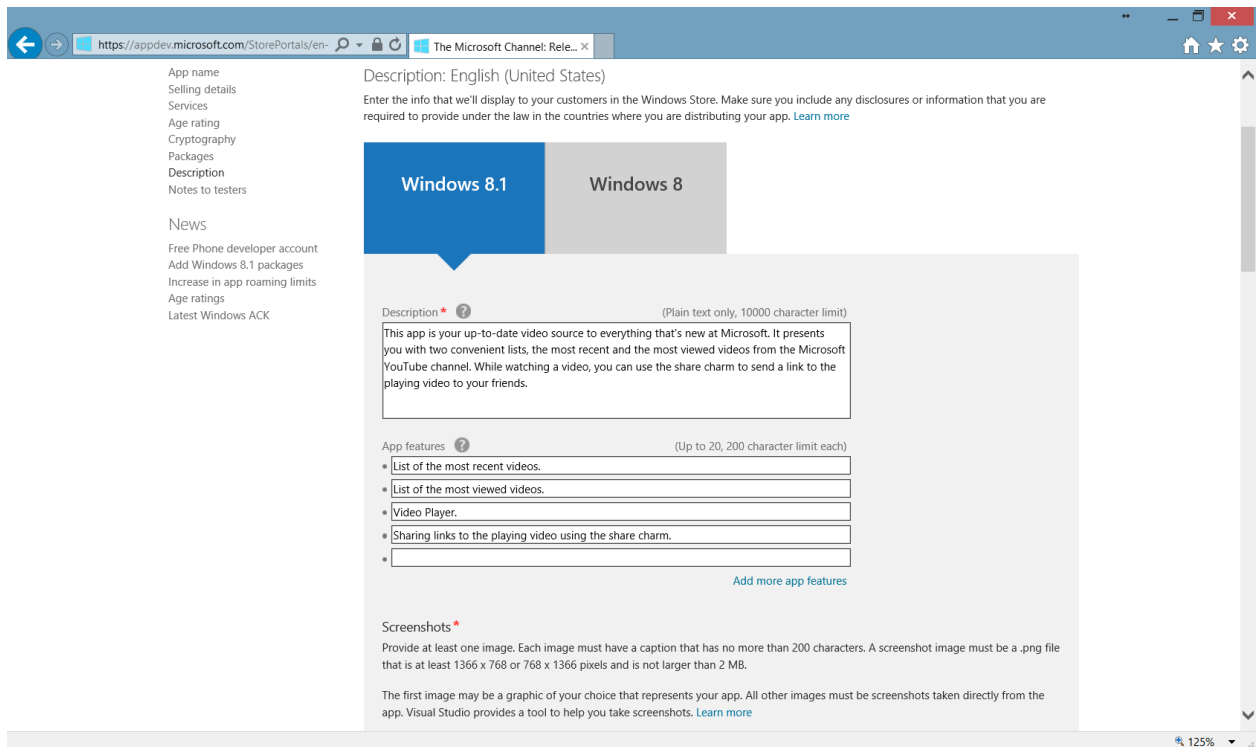
After the upload completes, you will see the package appear on the Dev Center under the “Windows 8.1” title. We didn’t provide a Windows 8, only a Windows 8.1 version, so this is correct.



Description

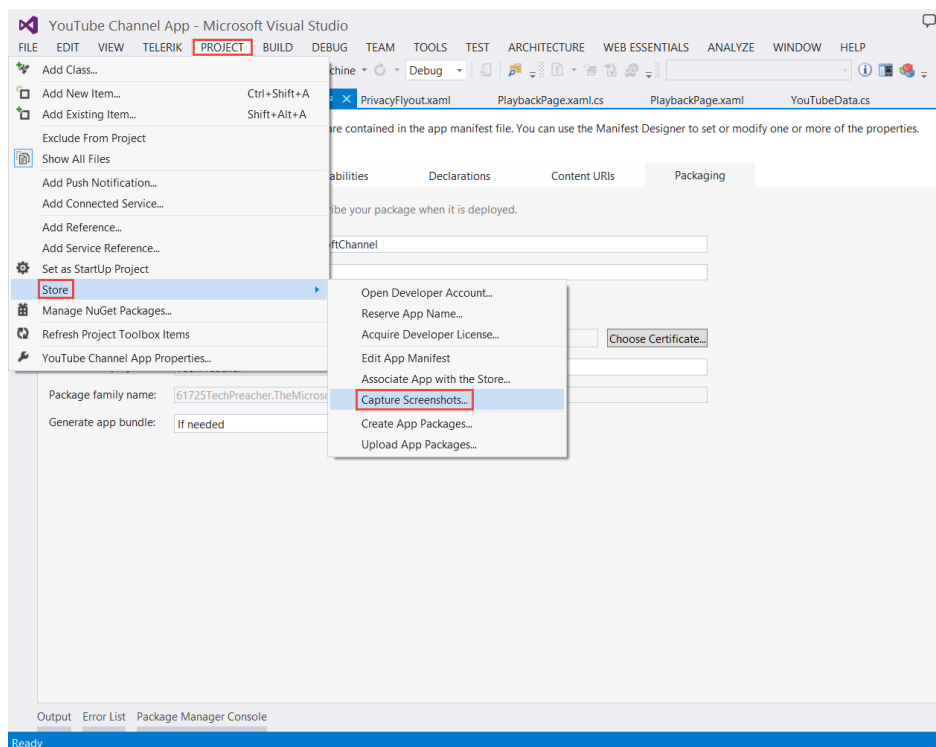
Here, you will find a description page for every version (Windows 8, Windows 8.1) and every language you have created the app in. We will only have to provide one set of data as our app is English only and runs on Windows 8.1.

Add a description and a short list of app features. Feel free to steal from the text below but make sure to use your own YouTube channel name.

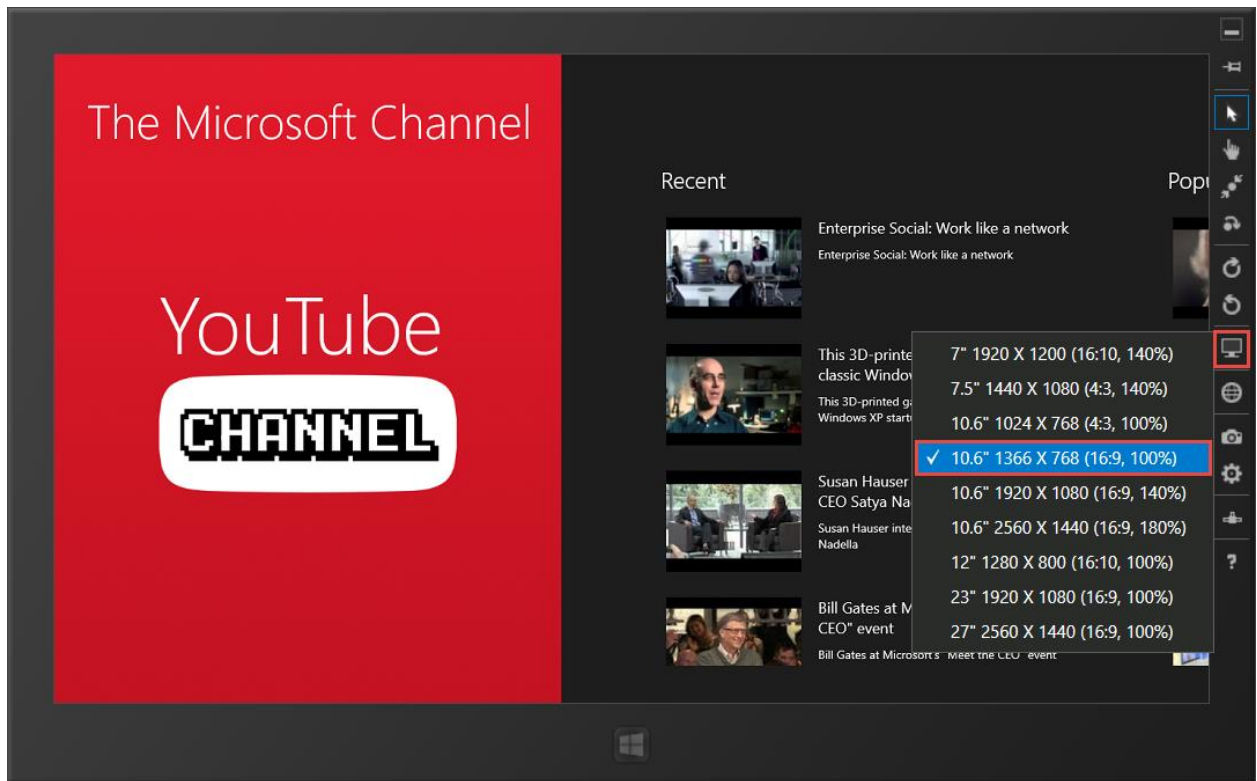


Description – Screenshots

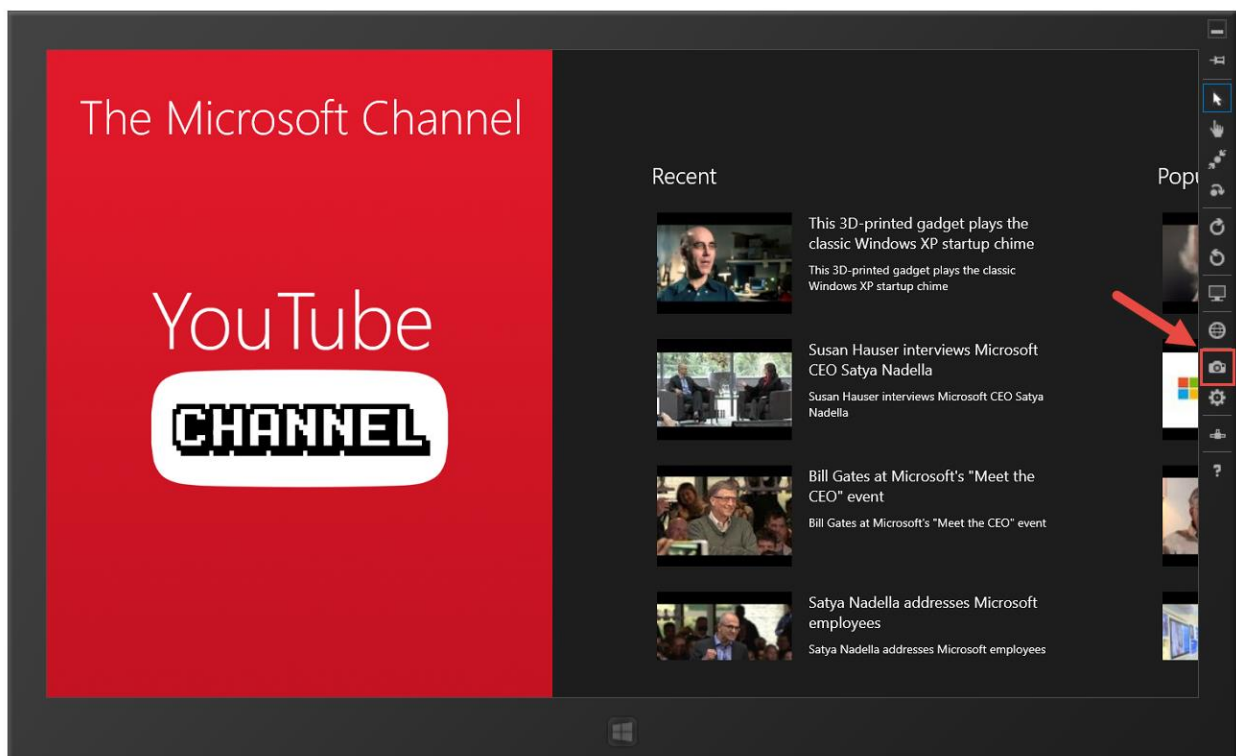
The quickest way to get to the screen shots in the format required by the store (1366px * 768px, <2MB) is to head back to Visual Studio and select “Project”, “Store” and “Capture Screenshots” from the pulldown menus.



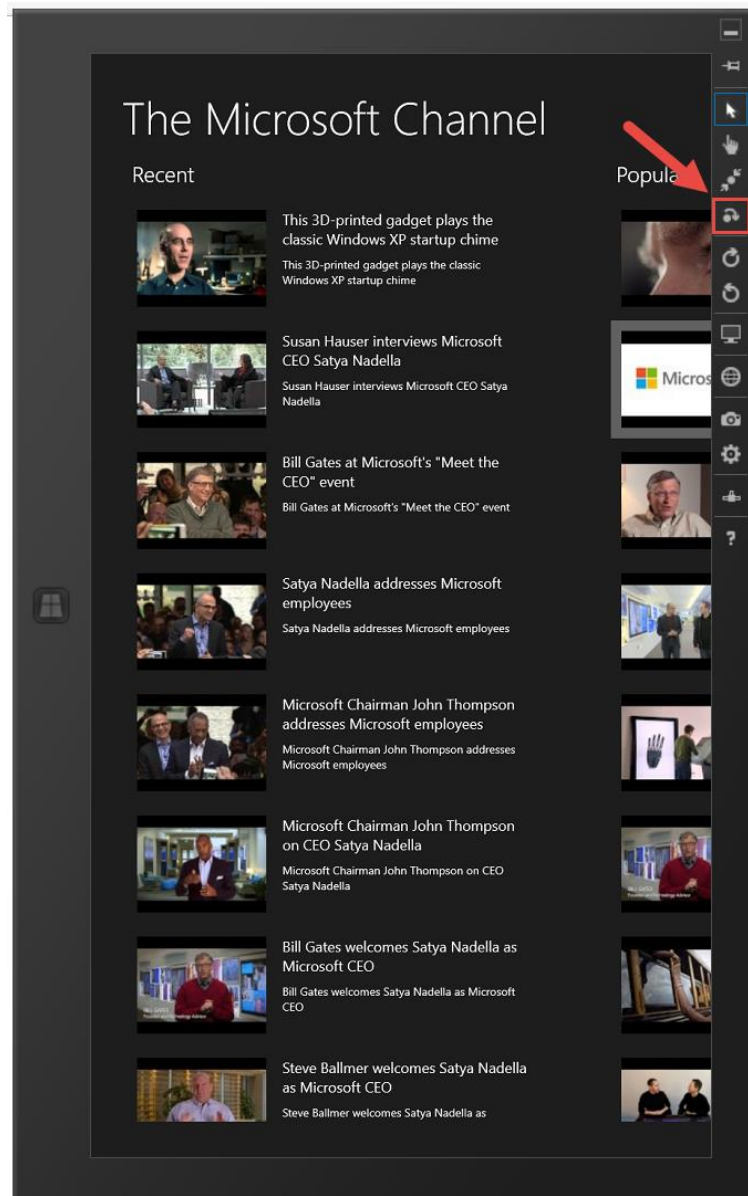
This will start the Simulator running your app. Make sure you have the right resolution set.



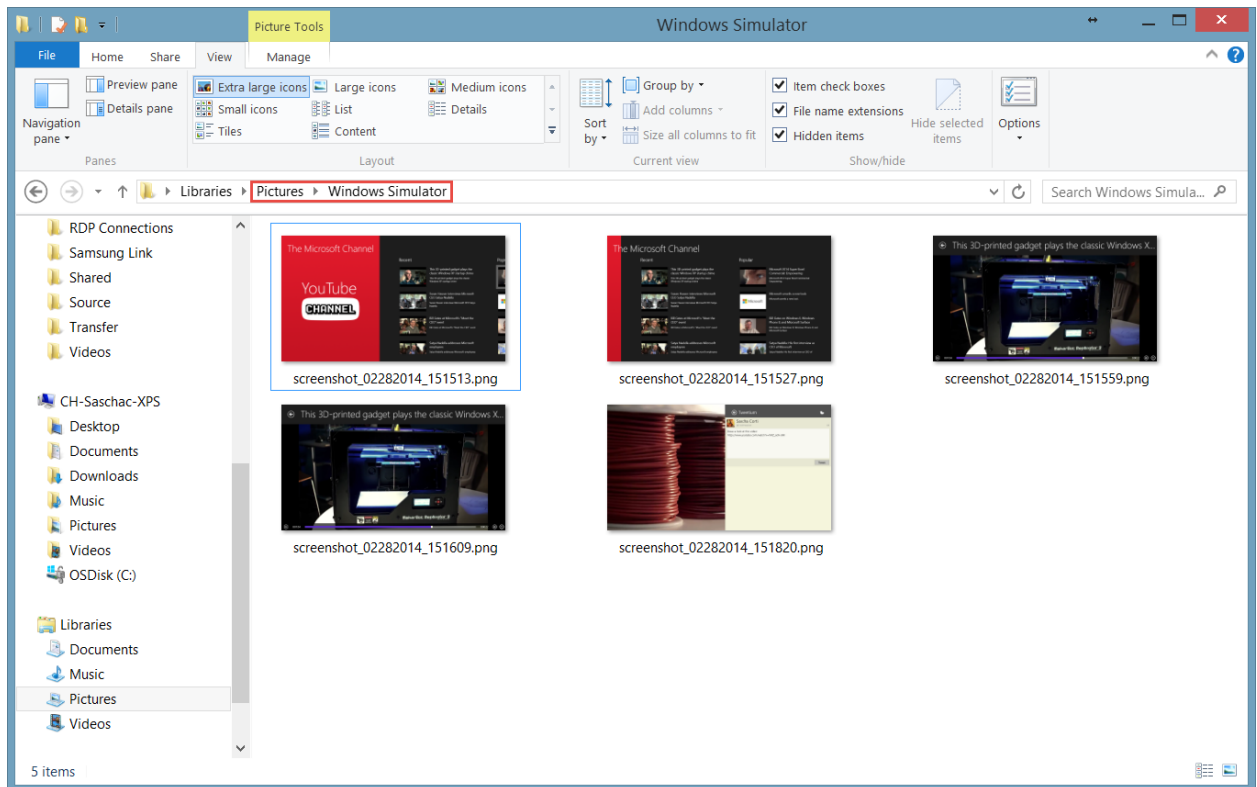
Now navigate to the different views in your app (the main page, the main page scrolled to the right, the video player and maybe the sharing charm in action) and press the "Screenshot" button every time you like the look.



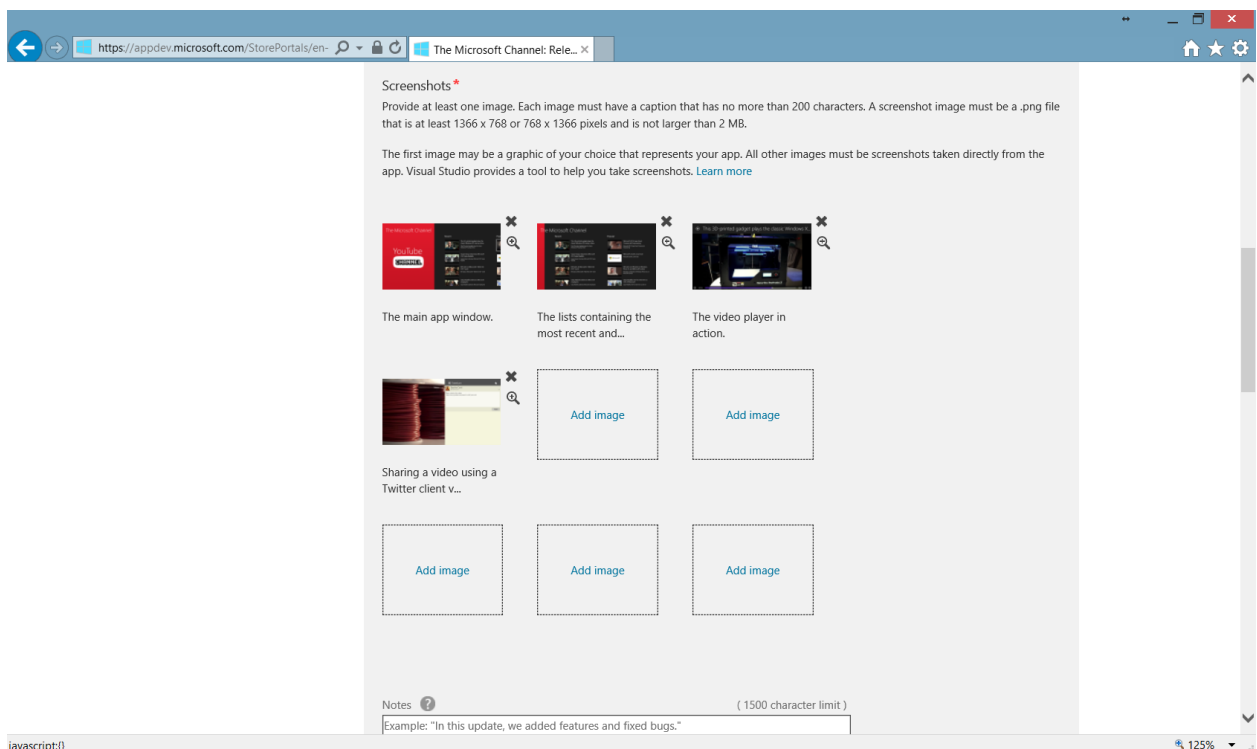
You can also rotate your simulator to test and screenshot your app running in a vertical resolution by pressing the rotate button.



All the screenshots are automatically saved in the "My Pictures\Windows Simulator" folder. Make sure you have all the screenshots you need.

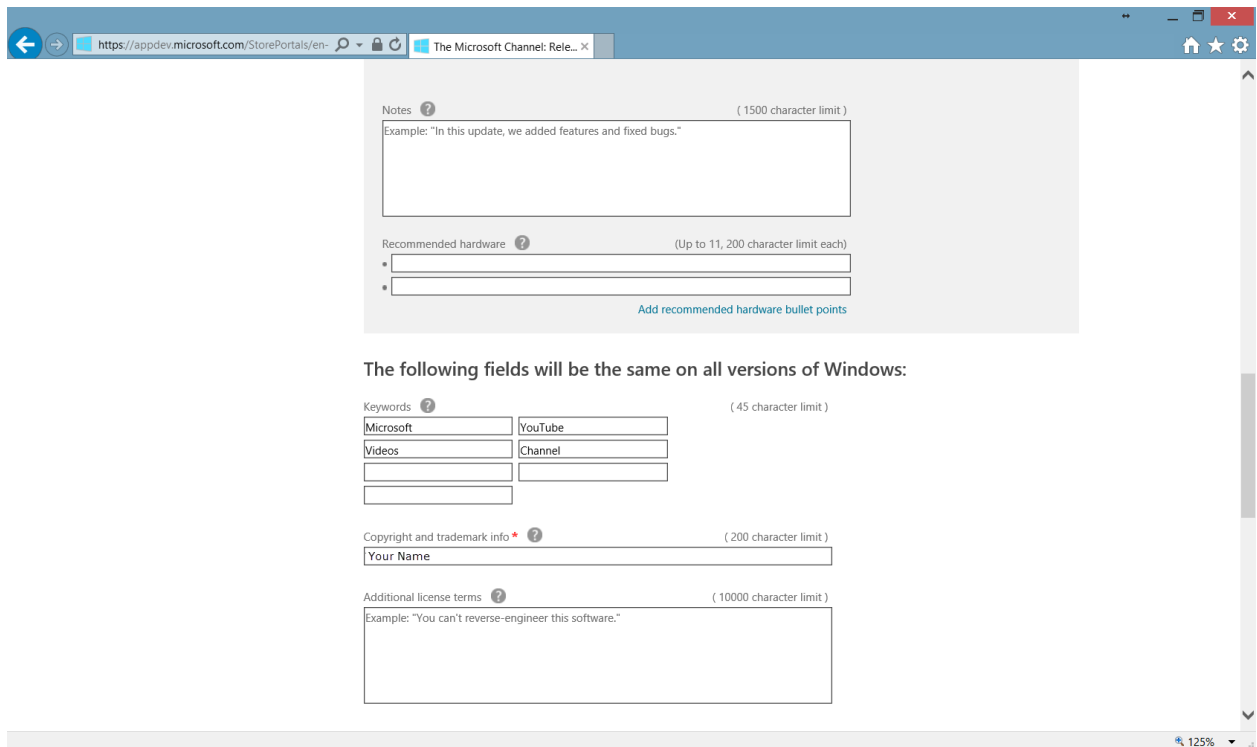


Head over to the Dev Center and click on the “Add image” links to upload all your screenshots. Don’t forget to add a short description of what can be seen in the picture.



Description – Keywords

Add some keywords relevant to your app and your Dev Center publisher name in the “Copyright” field.



Notes [?] (1500 character limit)
 Example: "In this update, we added features and fixed bugs."

Recommended hardware [?] (Up to 11,200 character limit each)
 •
 •
[Add recommended hardware bullet points](#)

The following fields will be the same on all versions of Windows:

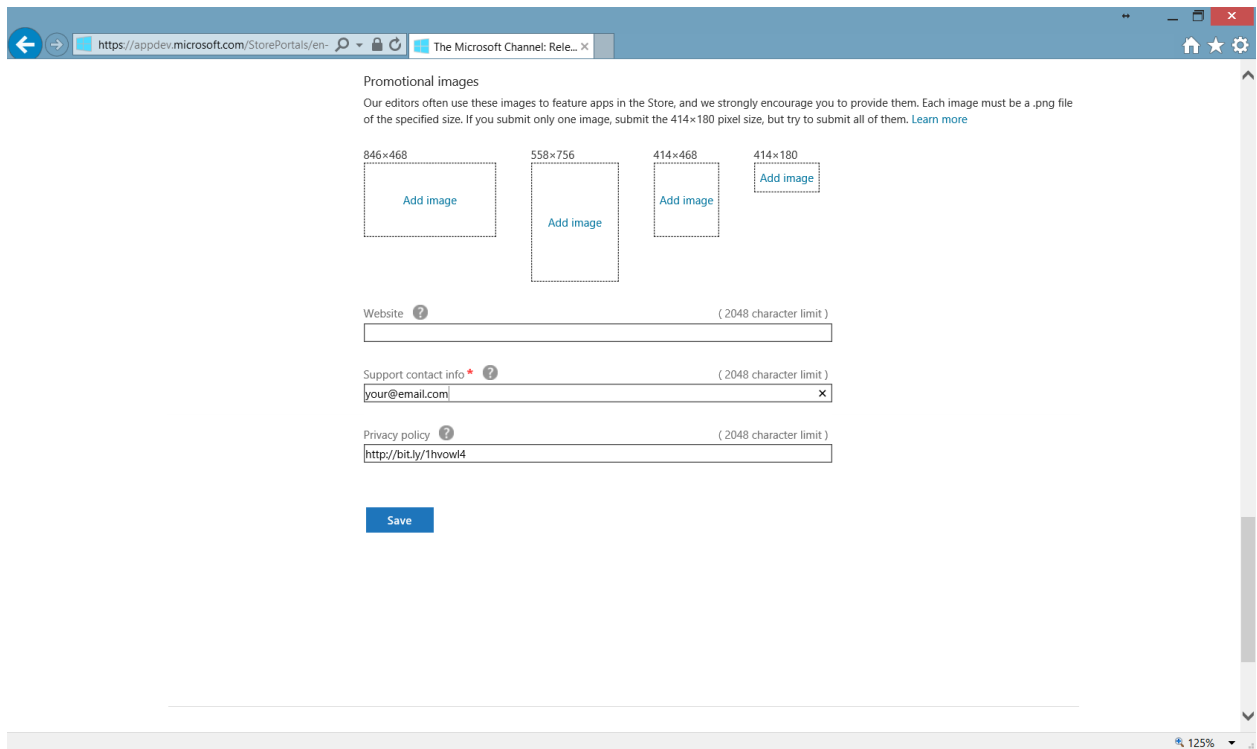
Keywords [?] (45 character limit)
 Microsoft YouTube
 Videos Channel

Copyright and trademark info [?] (200 character limit)
 Your Name

Additional license terms [?] (10000 character limit)
 Example: "You can't reverse-engineer this software."

In the "Support Contact Info" field, type the email address you have used when creating your privacy policy.

Get the link to your online privacy policy and shorten it using any URL shortener. I have used <https://bitly.com/>. Paste the shortened link into the "Privacy Policy" field and make sure, it really works! Your app would fail certification if this link was wrong and that would be a pity!



Promotional images
 Our editors often use these images to feature apps in the Store, and we strongly encourage you to provide them. Each image must be a .png file of the specified size. If you submit only one image, submit the 414x180 pixel size, but try to submit all of them. [Learn more](#)

846x468 Add image
 558x756 Add image
 414x468 Add image
 414x180 Add image

Website [?] (2048 character limit)

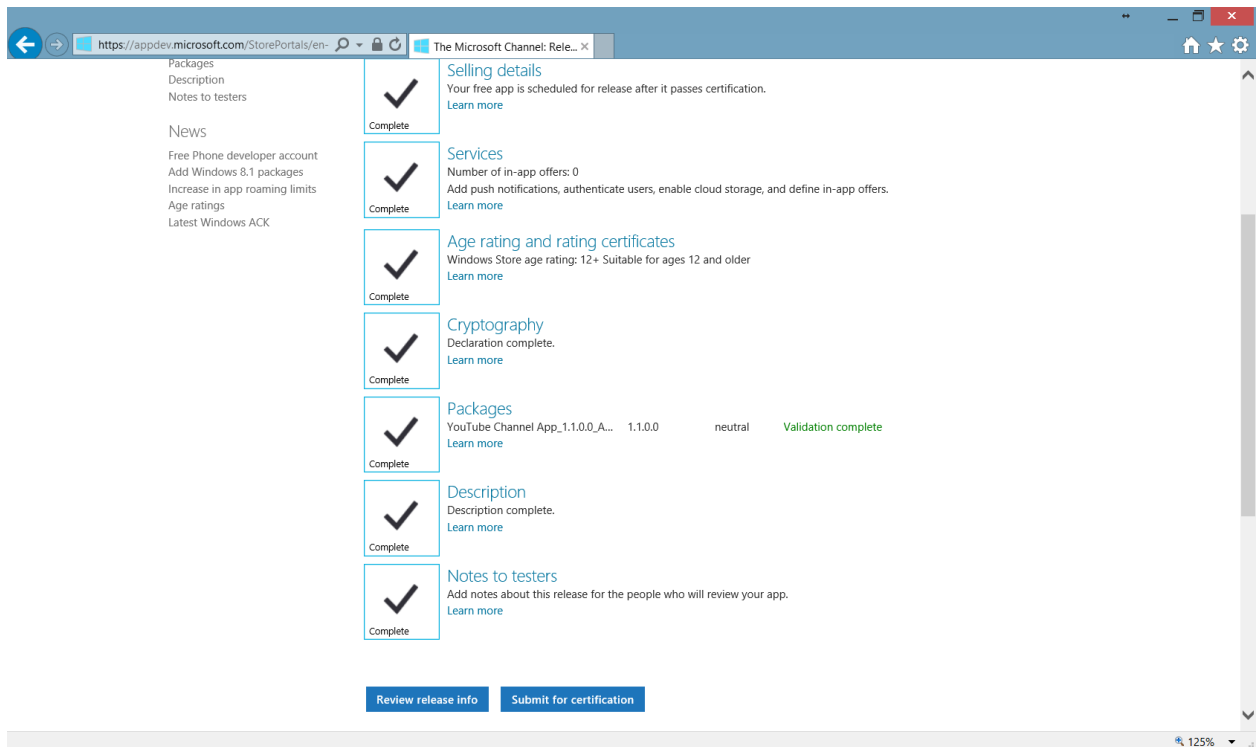
Support contact info [?] (2048 character limit)
 your@email.com

Privacy policy [?] (2048 character limit)
 http://bit.ly/1hvow14

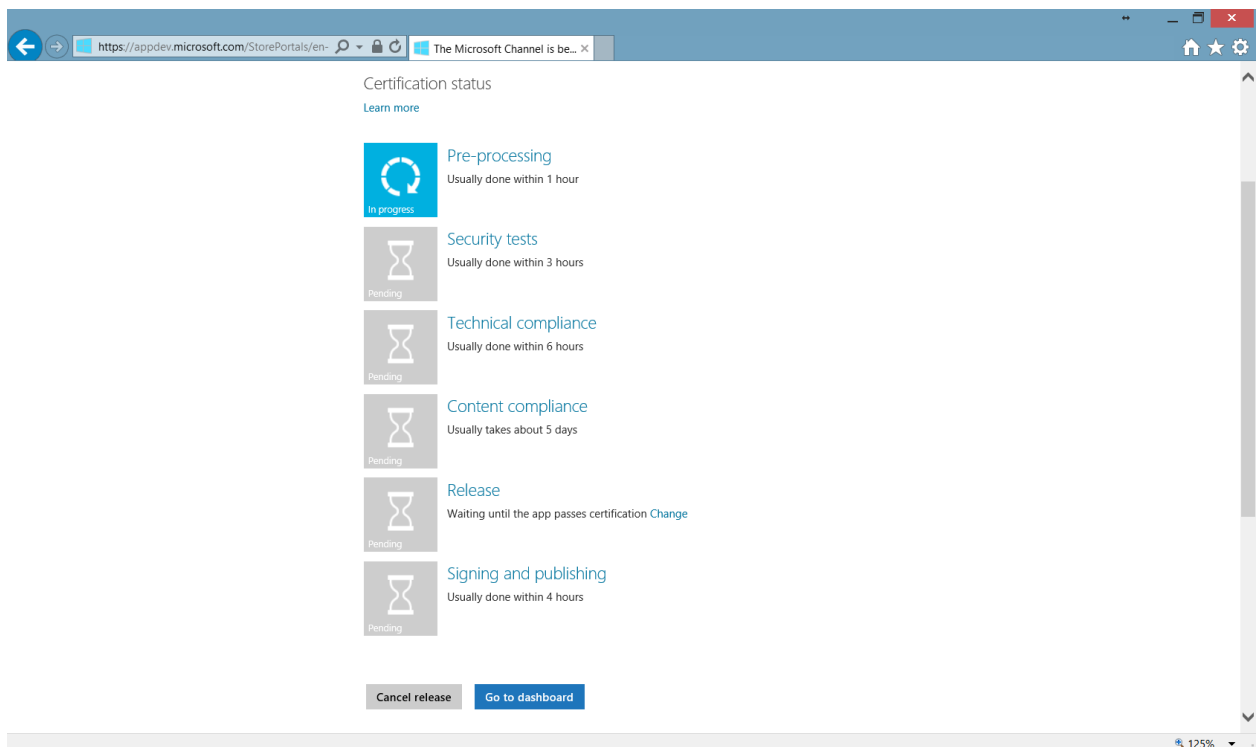
[Save](#)

Notes to testers

There are no special testing requirements for our app, so this section can be left blank.



Once all the steps show as “Complete”, you can submit your app for publishing to the Windows Store by pressing “Submit for Certification”. You will see a summary of the certification progress.



Congratulations! Your app should become available in the Windows Store within a few hours to a few days.

This concludes the hands-on lab.