

How to develop a widget

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01. Set up development environment (1/2)

Start by following set up steps as described by Microsoft SPFx team

<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/sharepoint/dev/spfx/set-up-your-development-environment>

In summary:

- Node.js + npm (latest version of Node.js LTS)
- Code editor (VS Code, Atom, Webstorm, etc.)
- Gulp (`npm install gulp --global`)
- Yeoman (`npm install yo --global`)
- Yeoman SharePoint generator (`npm install @microsoft/generator-sharepoint --global`)
- Modern browser (Edge Chromium, Chrome)

01. Set up development environment (2/2)

Extra steps necessary for developing widgets:

- Yeoman Widgets generator (`npm install @ichicraft/generator-widgets --global`)
- To host widgets locally for debugging, trust self-signed developer certificate provided by SPFx (`gulp trust-dev-cert`). This can only be fired from generated SharePoint project.

02. Building a simple widget



```
temp yo @ichicraft/widgets
```

```
Welcome to the Ichicraft
Widget Solution
Generator!
```

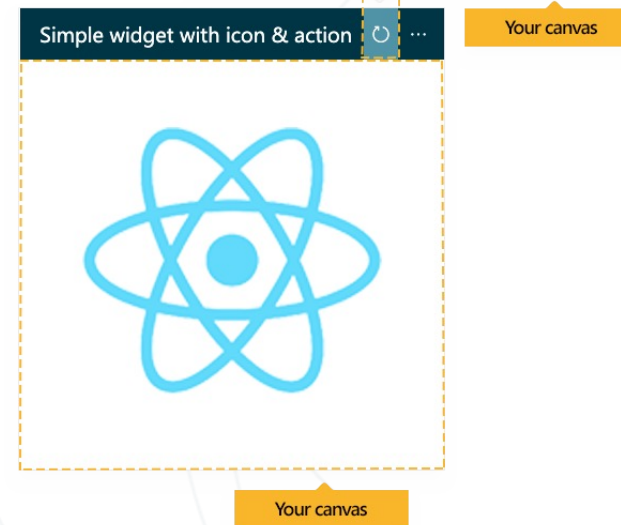
Your choices

```
What's the widget's title? Simple widget with icon & action
Provide a description for the widget This is a cool widget
Will the widget have configurable settings for the end user? No
Will the widget have configurable settings for the administrator? No
Where do you want to place the files? Create a subfolder with solution name
Widget board url for debugging purposes https://contoso.sharepoint.com
yo-rc.json
```



Your notification

Refresh the content of this widget.



02. Build a simple widget

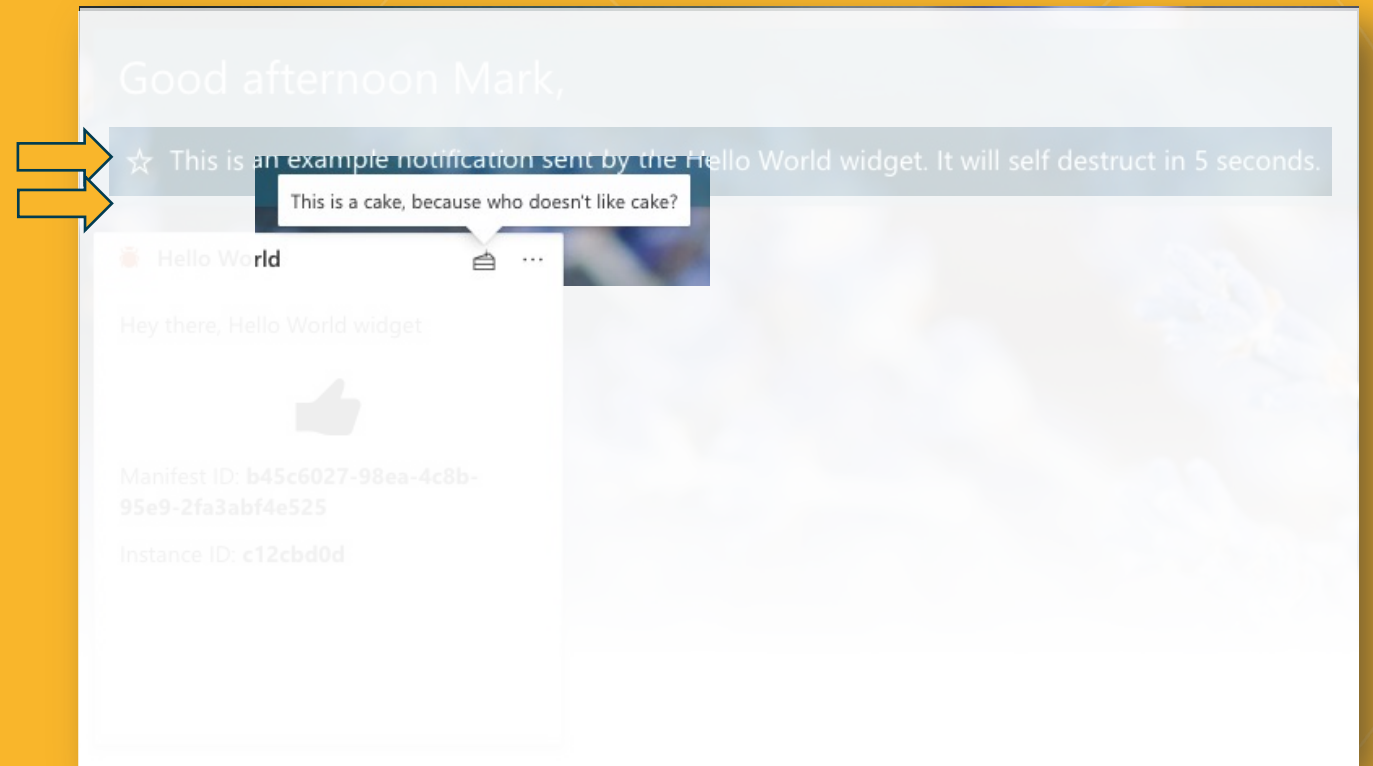
- Run the generator
 - Leave everything default, except last step: Widget board url

- Result: a simple widget without configuration options

- Notification example

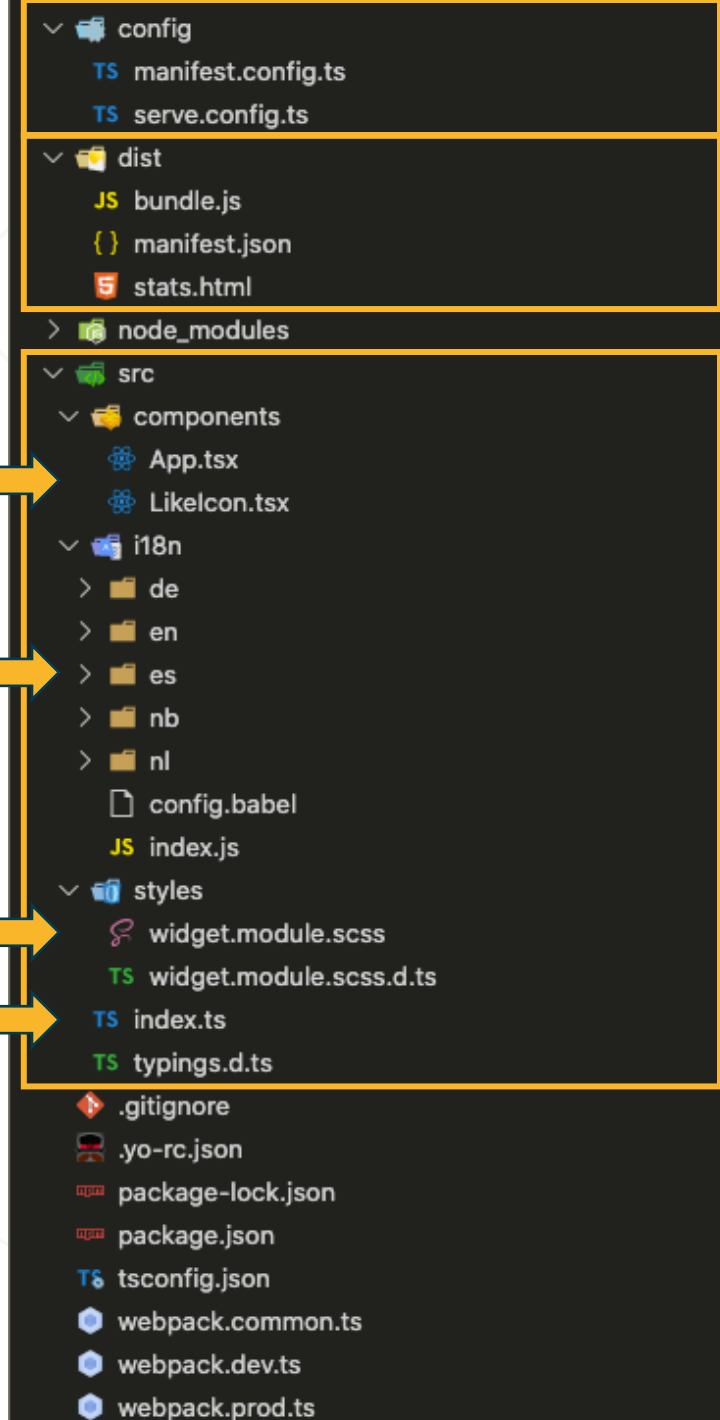
- Custom CommandBar item example

- **'npm run start'** to start debugging
 - 'Hot reloading' allows you to build and debug automatically



03. Widget project anatomy (1/3)

- The stack:
 - TypeScript by default
 - SASS for styling
 - i18next (+ react-i18next) library for internationalization (multilingual)
 - Webpack for bundling & local dev server
- Important folders
 - `/config`: configuration files for widget (manifest.config.ts) and local debugging (serve.config.ts)
 - `/dist`: build output for both local debugging and production builds
 - `/src`: actual source code for the widget
 - `/src/index.ts` (Widget base class)
 - `/src/components/**/*` (React components)
 - `/src/i18n/**/*` (Language resource files)
 - `/src/styles/*` (Sass style files)



03. Widget project anatomy (2/3)

/src/index.ts -> ❤️ of the widget

- Extends **BaseWidget** class (like BaseWebPart in SPFx)
- Gives access to **widget context** (like Web Part context in SPFx)
- Allows overriding of various 'lifecycle' functions, like
 - **cleanupResources()**: for cleaning up resources on unmounting
 - **onInit()**: for stuff that needs to happen before rendering
 - **render(domElement: HTMLDivElement)**: rendering the widget
 - *...other functions available if widget is 'configurable'*
- These functions are called by the Widget Board web part
- If functions aren't implemented/overridden, the widget might fail to render correctly (only render function is required).

03. Widget project anatomy (3/3)

The widget context (type `WidgetContext`)

- Available in `BaseWidget` through `this.context`
- Provides (limited) access to web part context (`aadTokenProviderFactory`, `msGraphClientFactory`)
- Contains security related functions (e.g. `isCurrentUserMemberOfSPGroup(groupId)`)
- Information related to site and user (`language`, `userName`, etc)
- Widget related info and functionality, scoped by
 - **manifest**: everything related to widget (regardless of installation)
 - **definition**: everything related to widget variant, as configured by admin
 - **instance**: everything related to a single widget on a user's board

04. Build a configurable widget

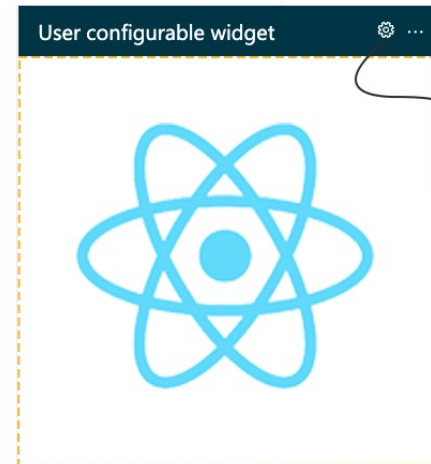


```
+ temp yo @ichicraft/widgets

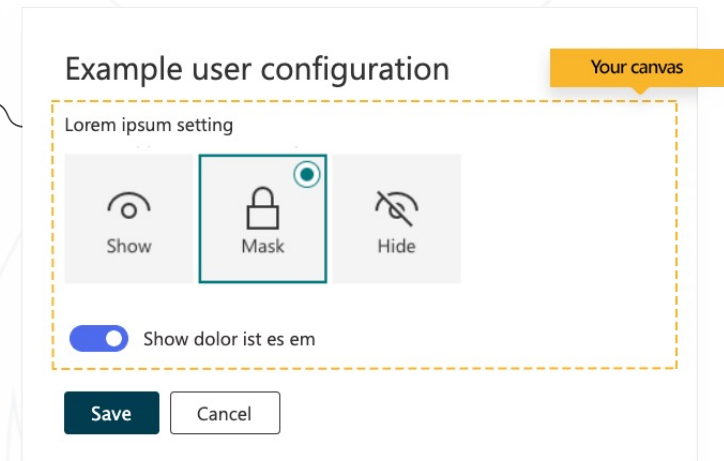
Welcome to the Ichicraft
Widget Solution
Generator!

Your choices

? What's the widget's title? User configurable widget
? Provide a description for the widget This is a cool widget
? Will the widget have configurable settings for the end user? Yes
? Will the widget have configurable settings for the administrator? No
? Where do you want to place the files? Create a subfolder with solution name
? Widget board url for debugging purposes https://contoso.sharepoint.com
yo-rc.json
```

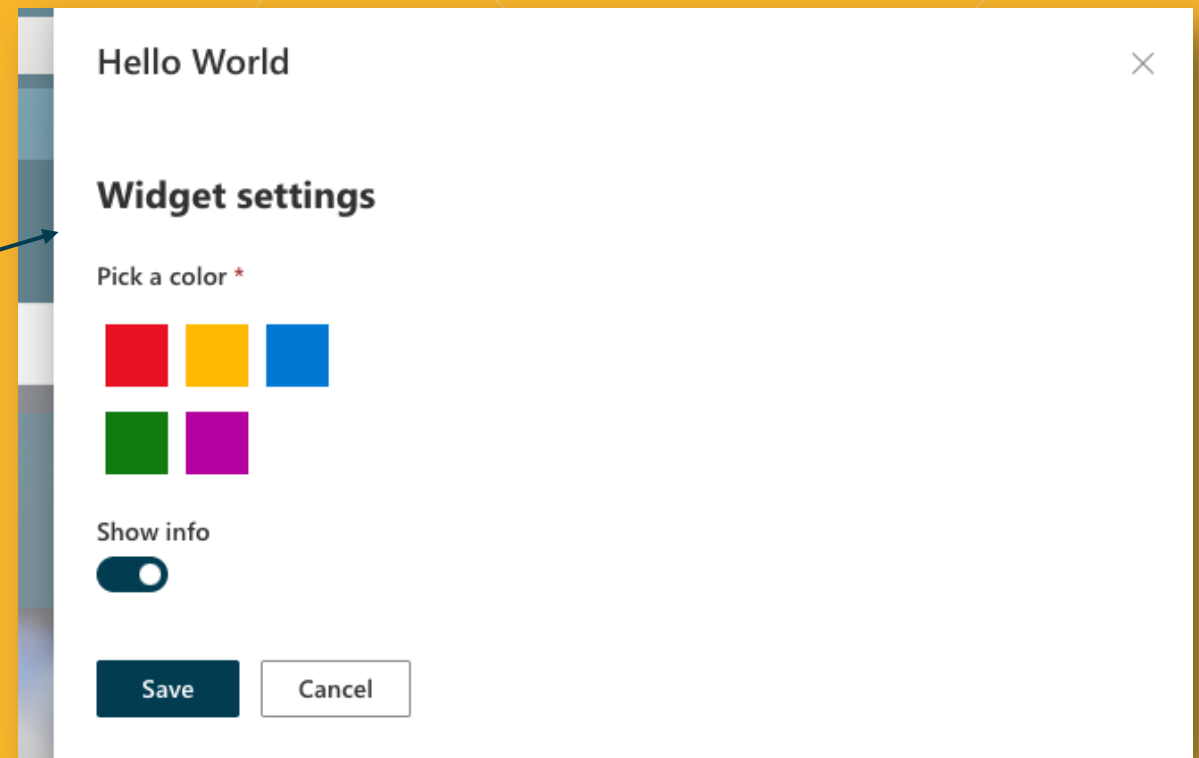
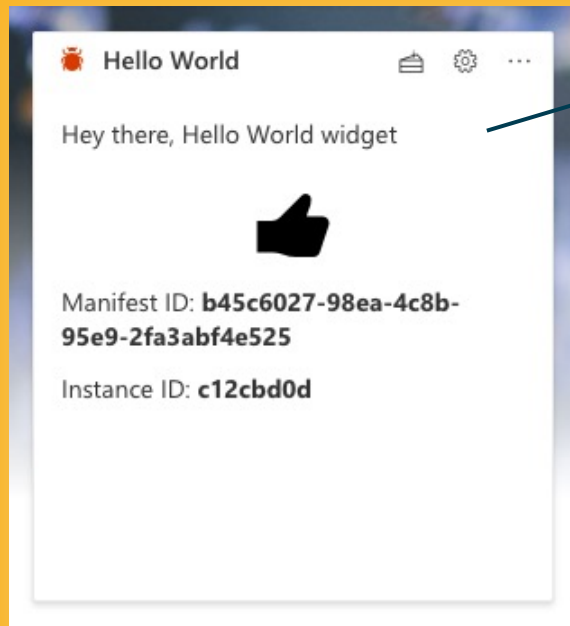


Your canvas



04. Build a user configurable widget

- Run the generator
 - Will the widget have configurable settings for the end user? YES!
- Result: a user configurable widget
- `'npm run start'` to start debugging



05. Project anatomy configurable widget

Configurable widgets need more overriding of various 'lifecycle' functions in widget base class implementation:

- `render[User|Admin]Configuration(domElement)`: functions to specifically render the configuration forms
- `validate[User|Admin]ConfigurationForm()`: functions called when user or admin tries to save configuration. Allows form validation before persisting configuration.
- `getSerialized[User|Admin]Configuration()`: functions to serialize the configuration for the widget board to persist.
- `verifyPersisted[User|Admin]Configuration(config)`: functions to verify if persisted configuration data is (still) correct.

06. Build a fully configurable widget

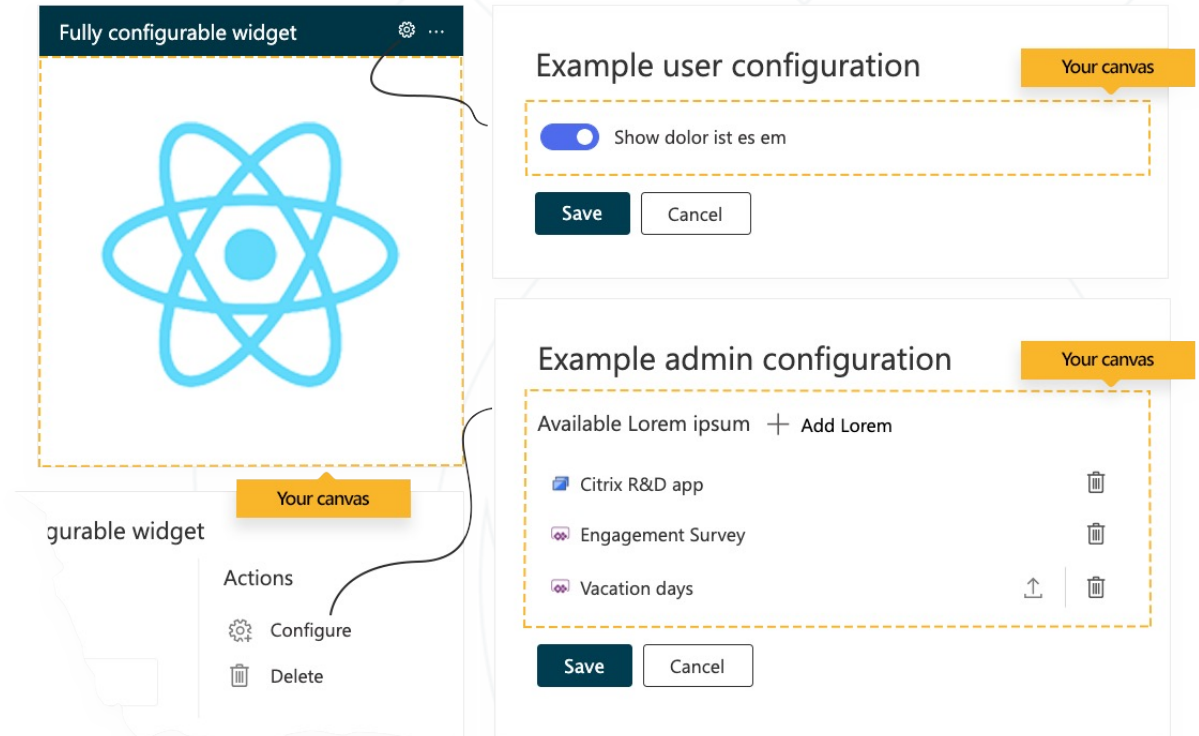


```
+ temp yo @ichicraft/widgets

Welcome to the Ichicraft
Widget Solution
Generator!

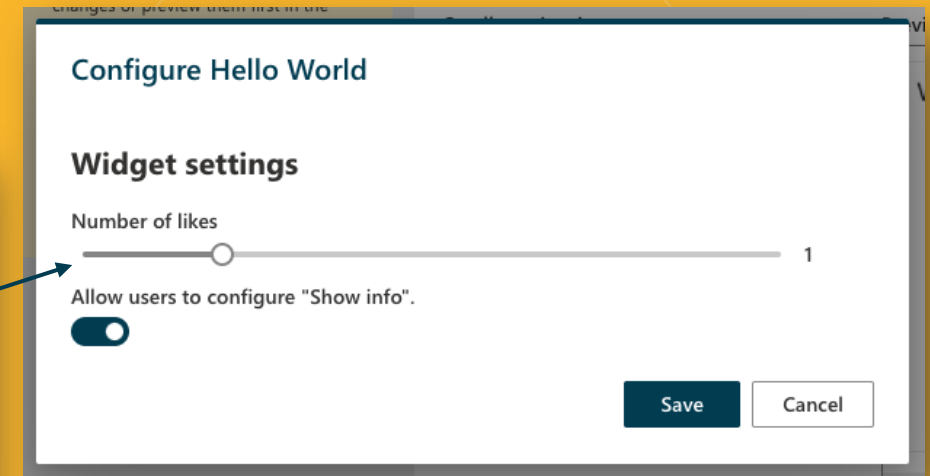
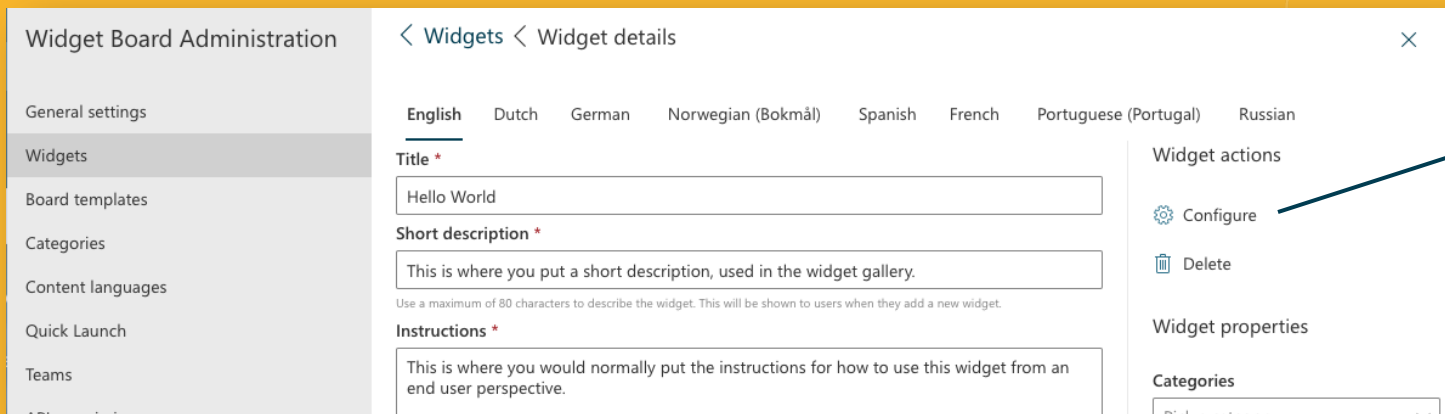
Your choices

? What's the widget's title? Fully configurable widget
? Provide a description for the widget This is a cool widget
? Will the widget have configurable settings for the end user? Yes
? Will the widget have configurable settings for the administrator? Yes
? Where do you want to place the files? Create a subfolder with solution name
? Widget board url for debugging purposes https://contoso.sharepoint.com
yo-rc.json
```



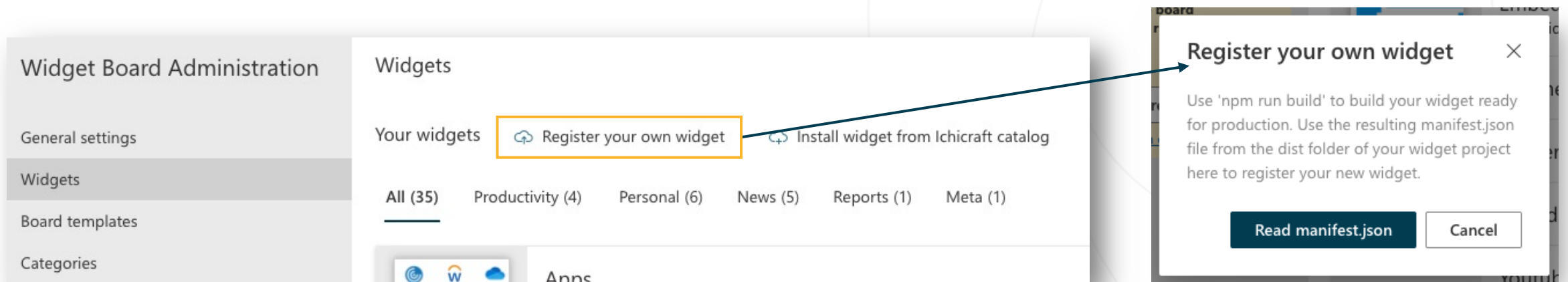
06. Build a fully configurable widget

- Run the generator
 - Will the widget have configurable settings for the end user? YES!
 - Will the widget have configurable settings for the administrator? YES!
- Result: a fully configurable widget
- `'npm run start'` to start debugging



07. Ready for production?

- Provide predicted script url in scriptUrl property in manifest.config.ts
- `npm run build` to make production ready bundle and manifest.json
- Host the `bundle.js` on a web server, CDN, SharePoint document library or a SP document library configured as CDN (<https://docs.microsoft.com/nl-nl/microsoft-365/enterprise/use-microsoft-365-cdn-with-spo?view=o365-worldwide>)
- Use `manifest.json` to register your own widget in the Widget Board Administration panel:



08. Deploy widget

- Prepare default document library 'Documents' by creating a folder "HelloWorldWidget"
- Manually update manifest.config.ts by setting scriptUrl property to "[tenant].sharepoint.com/[yoursite]/Shared%20Documents/HelloWorldWidget/bundle.js"
- **'npm run build'** to make production bundle
- Upload bundle.js to folder in document library
- Use manifest.json to register own widget
- Preview configuration
- Save (and persist)

The image displays three overlapping screenshots from the SharePoint interface:

- Top Screenshot:** A 'Documents' library view showing a folder named 'HelloWorldWidget' created 5 minutes ago by Mark van Dijk.
- Middle Screenshot:** A view of the 'HelloWorldWidget' folder containing a file named 'bundle.js' uploaded 'A few seconds ago' by Mark van Dijk.
- Bottom Screenshot:** The 'Widget configuration' dialog box. The 'Title' is 'Hello World'. The 'Short description' is 'This is where you put a short description, used in the widget gallery.' The 'Instructions' field is empty. The 'Widget actions' section shows 'Configure' and 'Delete' buttons. The 'Widget properties' section shows 'Categories' (a dropdown), 'Audience(s)' (a text input), and 'Push widget' (a toggle switch set to 'No'). A 'Small preview image' and a 'Preview image' (labeled 'Widget generator') are also visible.