

From Coffee Roaster to App Creator: How Eco-Coffee founder Edward Denyer built his own business tools with Google's AI-powered developer tools

Challenge

Originally an engineering student, founder Edward Denyer was inspired by Colombia's rich coffee heritage while on a sabbatical in Bogotá, and identified a gap in the Waterloo Region market for premium, fresh-roasted coffee. In 2004, he launched Eco Coffee in Kitchener, Ontario. As the roastery grew into a Waterloo Region community hub, Edward wanted to expand into international coffee education and manage operations remotely from his family farm in Colombia. However, daily operations were highly labour intensive and pricing inventory from thirty distinct coffee origins relied on an outdated, complex legacy database.

Solution

Edward used Google's developer and AI platforms to digitize his business operations. Collaborating with Google Gemini as a technical partner, he built the code and cloud architecture to transition his workflows online. He utilized Firebase to build a real-time pricing matrix for thirty coffee origins and is developing a Cafe Costing App to map out ingredients. He also used Google AI Studio to build an equipment maintenance ticketing system and a voice-interactive customer CRM system.

Impact

These custom tools have dramatically increased Eco Coffee's efficiency across both roasting and cafe locations. The maintenance ticketing app has minimized roaster downtime, keeping production high. The Firebase app allows Edward to update wholesale quotes instantly, protecting margins in volatile global markets, while the Cafe Costing App tracks daily sales and matches labor costs directly to revenue. This data enables his team to focus entirely on high-margin products while cutting out labor-intensive tasks that weren't paying off. Ultimately, this automation has helped Edward digitize his workflows and supercharge his business, all without losing his connection to the community.



"My world is coffee and hands-on operations, but I used to spend way too much time anchored to the desk drowning in manual data management. By tapping into my tech background and plugging Google's AI tools right into our systems, I've completely transformed our workflows—finally freeing me up to focus on the big picture and drive this enterprise forward."

Edward Denyer, Founder

