

# Vending Technology News



## **Briggo Marries Robotic Precision With Direct Trade Coffee, Serves Dell Corporate**

*By Elliot Maras*

Love your specialty coffee but dread waiting line watching a barista? Fear not. In fact, if you're a true coffee aficionado, you can have it exactly the way you like it, without waiting, every time.

The third wave of specialty coffee – the direct trade movement – now has its own fully automated kiosk. The 48-foot Coffee Haus kiosk encases a robotic barista that allows customers to serve themselves a coffee beverage customized to their personal taste.

Customers can order and pay from a smartphone app, online, or directly from the natural wood-paneled kiosk.

Direct trade coffee is the most recent wave in specialty coffee, in which coffee roasters import directly from the coffee country of origin rather than relying on a third-party certification (known

as “Fair Trade.”) In many cases, Briggo’s coffee buyer visits the actual site where the coffee is grown.

But the method of sourcing is not the Coffee Haus’ unique feature. What is unique about the Coffee Haus is that it marries direct trade specialty coffee with robotics and remote order and pay.

“The customer controls the experience,” says Kevin Nater, CEO and co-founder. Once the order is made, “We stay in touch with them (the customer), we send them a text when it’s ready. There’s really no other system out there that does that, and at the other end of the Coffee Haus, it delivers on the promise every time with robotic precision. So there are no ‘good days and bad days.’”

“There’s enough intelligence in the system that knows that if all the elements of that drink didn’t hit the spec, it throws it away and remakes it,” he says. “The entire drink is prepared for you. The customer simply picks up their drink with nothing to add or mix.”

Upon arriving at the Coffee Haus, the customer gets to see the robotics in action on a flat panel screen that displays order status and other information. A variety of drink choices are offered, from espressos and lattes to iced coffees and hot chocolate.

iPhone and Android apps are available for the Coffee Haus in the App Store and Google Play under "Briggo." Customers can also order coffee through the same user interface at [www.briggo.com](http://www.briggo.com). “The UI (user interface) at the Coffee Haus is absolutely consistent with the mobile UI,” Nater says.

“When we designed the machine, we were trying to get people to not think of vending coffee, but this new, unattended retail platform that’s connected to the Internet,” says Nater. “You can look through the window and see robotics, so there’s a pretty high entertainment factor.”

Charles Studor, Briggo’s founder and chief technology officer, fell in love with the taste and quality of the coffee in the Republic of Honduras. He came up with the idea of merging great tasting coffee with new technology so coffee lovers who are unable to visit a specialty coffee shop can still get quality coffee drinks just the way they like them.

At the time, the iPhone had just launched, giving Studor inspiration to find a way to use technology to deliver a great cup of coffee.

“Mobile commerce was just launched,” says Nater. “He (Studor) basically said, ‘there’s now a computer in my hand that is tied to a cloud infrastructure that we could tie to the world’s first coffee robot and a build a business.’”

The technology is proprietary. The Coffee Haus has been designed to allow customers to monitor and adjust the variables that can make a difference in milliseconds, milliliters and grams. Each drink is freshly ground to order, and the lattes and mochas are made with fresh milk and frothed by custom frothers. Waste is minimized with robotic precision.

Customers can create, name and save their favorite drinks and share them with friends via Facebook.

Briggo installed its first kiosk on the University of Texas' Austin campus in July of 2013 and tested the Coffee Haus for one year. After making some upgrades, they wanted to take the Coffee Haus to a corporate environment, so they took it to Dell in March 2015, where it now operates unattended.

Briggo plans to deploy the machines at a variety of customer locations, including corporate campuses, universities, airports, hospitals and more.

“The Coffee Haus a first of its kind experience, both physical and digital,” Nater says.