

Logistics king delivers new nonprofit

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Fritz

Lynn Fritz spent three decades running a multimillion-dollar company that moved commodities of every size around the world. Now, the logistics giant and San Francisco native is starting a nonprofit organization to promote the best practices in managing a disaster. A year ago, United Parcel Service bought Fritz Cos. for \$450 million in United Parcel stock. Since then, Fritz, the former chairman and CEO, has been focusing on developing Fritz Institute, a nonprofit organization that aims to standardize top-notch logistics techniques for disaster relief.

The 59-year-old entrepreneur is now director general of the institute. Already this year he has spent \$2 million of his own money to start projects defining the institute's multi-faceted mission. It will likely start seeking and accepting charitable donations by the end of the year.

Organizations that provide relief

FRITZ: Entrepreneur wants nonprofits to help themselves through better technology and training

"have wonderful, focused people, but what is missing that I found through research, is the ability to help these organizations help themselves through technology, best practices and logistics training," Fritz said.

The institute's mission is ambitious. Fritz wants to tap the academic community to do case studies in disaster management that will yield best practices; make disaster relief management part of curricula at business schools and universities; and set up partnerships with businesses that will result in getting appropriate technology to relief agencies.

Already, he's funded these initiatives:

- Developing state-of-the-art logistics management software for the International Federation of the Red Cross that will expedite ordering, inventory and supply distribution.

- Forming partnerships with academic institutions such as Georgetown University and Florida International University to research best practices and provide training.

Jeffrey Zerwekh, chief operating officer of the American Red Cross Bay Area, said some of Fritz's goals are already part of the Red Cross' game plan.

Working with corporate partners and other relief agencies to get supplies where they are needed "is part of doing the business of providing aid and comfort," he said. "Anyone who wants to assist in that effort is welcome, especially if they can help us do it faster and better."