

'I Didn't Set Out to Build Freight Infrastructure': The Founder Story Behind Plug-In Freight Ops™

Founder Michelle DeFronzo shares how a career in early 3PL and logistics technology led to the creation of Plug-In Freight Ops™.

PEABODY, MA, UNITED STATES, June 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Michelle DeFronzo did not intend to build [digital freight infrastructure](#).

Long before Plug-In Freight Ops™, before logistics portals, automation workflows, or ecosystem coordination models, she was an EDI Manager in the early 1990s helping clients, developers, and operations teams navigate the emerging world of third-party logistics.

At a time when [logistics technology](#) was still evolving, DeFronzo worked directly between

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We turned operational pain into execution infrastructure.”

Michelle DeFronzo, CEO & Founder of ImEx Cargo

career.

“I learned very early that systems only work when they reflect how operations actually function in the real world,” said DeFronzo. “The technology was important, but the real value came from listening, solving problems, and creating something that helped people execute better



Plug-In Freight Ops™

Institutional Freight Execution Infrastructure

Structured visibility.
Coordinated execution.
Federal-grade accountability.



Plug-In Freight Ops™ visualizing digital freight infrastructure through structured visibility, coordinated execution, and institutional accountability.

customers trying to operationalize shipping workflows and developers building systems to support them. She met with clients to understand how their businesses moved products, collaborated with developers to improve systems functionality, and worked alongside operations teams to ensure those workflows could function in the real world.

That experience would shape the foundation of her

together.”

For DeFronzo, that first role in logistics became far more than a job. It introduced her to the fast-moving world of cargo, transportation, and operational coordination at a time when the logistics industry itself was rapidly evolving.

More importantly, it created a lasting benchmark.

“The environment was collaborative, inclusive, innovative, and focused on continuous improvement,” she said. “For over two decades, I found myself trying to recreate that same feeling inside my own company — that sense of accomplishment and shared purpose.”

In 2000, DeFronzo founded ImEx Cargo, growing it into a certified, multi-modal logistics company supporting airlines, government agencies, infrastructure stakeholders, and commercial supply chains. Over time, the company evolved beyond transportation services into a broader execution and coordination ecosystem designed to improve operational performance across fragmented logistics environments.

Plug-In Freight Ops™ was never originally intended as a commercial product. It began as an internal effort to solve operational challenges involving quoting, booking, tracking, communication, visibility, and reporting across multiple transportation stakeholders.

But as the system evolved, DeFronzo realized the operational gaps her company faced were not unique.

“What became clear very quickly is that these coordination problems existed everywhere,” said



Digital Freight Infrastructure-Plug In Freight Ops by ImEx Cargo



Michelle DeFronzo, CEO & Founder of ImEx Cargo

DeFronzo. "Across airlines, forwarders, trucking providers, public-sector projects, and partner ecosystems, people were still relying on disconnected workflows, email chains, spreadsheets, and siloed systems to manage highly complex operations."

That realization led to the expansion of Plug-In Freight Ops™ into a broader digital freight execution ecosystem focused on improving coordination, accountability, and operational visibility across fragmented transportation environments.

Today, the Plug-In Freight Ops™ ecosystem includes digital [freight execution infrastructure](#), workforce activation initiatives through ImEx Cargo Academy, DBE and supplier participation coordination, partner onboarding systems, visibility workflows, and operational collaboration tools designed to support airlines, GSAs, forwarders, trucking providers, government agencies, infrastructure programs, and logistics partners.

Rather than replacing existing systems, Plug-In Freight Ops™ is designed as a neutral execution and coordination layer that connects stakeholders, workflows, and operational handoffs across the logistics ecosystem.

DeFronzo believes the industry is entering a new phase where execution visibility, partner coordination, workforce readiness, and operational accountability will become increasingly critical across both public and private sector supply chains.

"Looking back now, I don't think I intentionally set out to build infrastructure," said DeFronzo. "I



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Official logo of ImEx Cargo, a woman-owned global logistics company

was trying to solve real operational problems. But somewhere along the way, those solutions evolved into something much larger than us.”

For over 25 years, DeFronzo has remained focused on the same core principle that first drew her into logistics: building systems that help people work better together.

About ImEx Cargo

ImEx Cargo is a certified woman-owned logistics and transportation company specializing in air cargo, freight forwarding, trucking coordination, government logistics, and digital execution infrastructure. Founded in 2000, the company supports airlines, GSAs, government agencies, infrastructure stakeholders, and commercial supply chains through operational coordination, visibility, and workflow execution solutions. The company is also the creator of Plug-In Freight Ops™, a digital freight execution ecosystem designed to improve coordination, accountability, and operational performance across fragmented logistics environments.

#PlugInFreightOps
#DigitalFreightInfrastructure
#LogisticsTechnology
#SupplyChain
#AirCargo
#TransportationTechnology
#FreightTech
#CargoInnovation
#LogisticsLeadership
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#DBE
#SupplyChainInnovation

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