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# EAST BAY BUSINESS TIMES

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## Tech support helps Goodwill resell donated computers

East Bay Business Times - by [Michael Fitzhugh](#)

**ReliaTech**, a small San Pablo technology repair service, is working with Goodwill Industries to refurbish, sell and maintain some of the 2.9 million pounds of computers donated to that organization each year.

The partnership puts a computer repair depot in Goodwill's San Francisco flagship store, and may expand the service to other Goodwill stores. The move expands a potential money-maker for Street Tech, the nonprofit behind the venture that plans to bring the service and associated training to Oakland and eventually Sacramento.

### Reaching profitability

When ReliaTech reaches profitability, a mark it neared this year and came close to last year, its net profits will begin to support Street Tech's IT certification, career training and life skill classes.

Those courses, which have served about 660 students, have helped put more than 90 percent of the trainees into technology jobs each year.

"It's partnerships like the one with Goodwill which, we hope, are going to take us to the level of making real profits and churning that back into the organization," said Barrie Hathaway, executive director of Street Tech.

### Marketing the key

The key will be finding new clients. For that, marketing will be key. "One of the great things Goodwill has is a strong marketing engine," said Hathaway. In addition, he's recruiting a new CEO with strong marketing skills to manage the service.

ReliaTech hosts 12 interns per year, three each quarter. Hathaway would like to double that number at Goodwill and grow the number of ReliaTech employees from its current four, to 19-1/2 by the end 2010.

The partnership is a good fit said Deborah Alvarez-Rodriguez, CEO of Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin counties.

It will help Goodwill fulfill its job training mission, keep computers out of landfills, and put really good quality computers into the hands of people who don't have them.

"We saw that if we were going to be selling refurbished computers in our stores, we really felt our customers deserved the same type of access to support you get if you buy a computer at mainstream store. Our customers deserve that," she said.

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