Jim Fruchterman

CEO at Benetech

Palo Alto, CA, US

Top social entrepreneur and exciting, experienced
keynoter

Biography

Jim Fruchterman, Benetech MacArthur Fellow, Technology and Social Entrepreneur Jim
Fruchterman is social entrepreneur and CEO of Benetech, a nonprofit technology company based in
Palo Alto, California. A technology entrepreneur and engineer, Fruchterman has been a rocket
scientist, founded two of the foremost optical character recognition companies, and created
numerous technology social enterprises. Fruchterman cofounded Calera Recognition Systems (now
part of Nuance, a public company) and RAF Technology, Inc. both of which were based on optical
character recognition technology. In 1989, Fruchterman founded Benetech as a nonprofit social
enterprise, to produce reading machines, based on the Calera technology, for people who are blind.
Benetech expanded its focus in 2000 and began creating new technology for people with disabilities
as well as the human rights and environmental movements. Benetech?s programs include
Bookshare, the world?s largest accessible online library for people with print disabilities, Martus,
software for tracking human rights violations and Miradi, project management tools for
conservationists. Fruchterman received a MacArthur Fellowship in 2006 in recognition of his work as
a pioneering social entrepreneur. He believes that technology is the ultimate leveler, allowing
disadvantaged people to achieve more equality in society.

Availability

Keynote, Author Appearance

Industry Expertise

Information Technology and Services, Electrical Engineering, Education/Learning, Philanthropy, Non-
Profit/Charitable, Library and Information Management, Computer Software, Internet

Areas of Expertise

Socially Beneficial Applications of Technology, Technology for People With Disabilities, Geeks
Serving Human Rights Activists, Rocket Scientist to Entrepreneur to Social Entrepreneur

Sample Talks

Technology Serving Humanity

What happens if a technology could do amazing things for society, but doesn't make enough money
for a regular company or venture capitalist?

Event Appearances

Title
Technology Serving Humanity

Title
Making the Book Truly Accessible

Title
Raising the Floor

Title
Developing Software for Human Rights

Education

California Institute of Technology
B.S. Engineering

California Institute of Technology
M.S. Applied Physics

Accomplishments

MacArthur Fellowship

MacArthur Fellowship