

# **Jim Fruchterman**

**CEO at Benetech**

Palo Alto, CA, US

Top social entrepreneur and exciting, experienced keynoter

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## **Description**

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.

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## **Availability**

Keynote, Author Appearance

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## **Industry Expertise**

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

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## **Topics**

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

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## **Affiliations**

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## 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?

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## Past Talks

### Title

Raising the Floor

### Title

Developing Software for Human Rights

### Title

Technology Serving Humanity

### Title

Making the Book Truly Accessible

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## Education

### California Institute of Technology

B.S. Engineering

### California Institute of Technology

M.S. Applied Physics

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## Accomplishments

MacArthur Fellowship

MacArthur Fellowship

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