

Josh Western

Bringing Space back down to earth

CEO and Co-founder, Space Forge, Space manufacturing company

Josh was just 26 when he co-founded Space Forge: that's the average age of someone working on the Apollo 11 programme. Space Forge exists to produce new materials in space that are impossible to produce on Earth.

Why? To redress the balance of our planet's finite natural resources and our continued existence on it.

Space Forge is developing the world's first fully reusable platform to unlock the benefits of manufacturing and experimentation in space, at scale. By producing next generation materials off planet and returning to Earth, a step change in humanity's progress is possible, together with the power to progress a clean industrial revolution.

Josh co-founded Space Forge in 2018. From kick-starting their mission to change the face of the space industry – and making space work for humanity - Josh, and co-founder Andrew Bacon, have taken the industry's leading startup from a garage in Bristol to raising the largest-ever seed round in Europe by a Space Tech company, backed by the UK Government. It is the first-ever company to be invested in directly by NATO.

Josh previously gained an extensive and varied knowledge of the UK Space Industry working for Thales Alenia Space in both marketing and sales, and he was seconded to the UK Space Agency, where he worked on everything from Critical National Infrastructure to technology harmonisation with European Space Agency member states.

It's difficult to think of a company that's harder to start, only armed with a 3D printer and a vacuum pump.

Space Forge built ForgeStar-0, Wales' first satellite which was designed and built from scratch in a national record of 5 months. The team watched it spend 6 minutes and 30 seconds in space as the rocket carrying it fell back to Earth.

Josh's passion for space started when he was 3 years old, when his Mum baked him a rocket cake. That, and many night-time car journeys gazing up at the constellation of Orion, after his Mum helped at his grandparents' fish and chip shop. Josh maintains a keen passion for cooking, is the only member of his family never to have been a chef and is known in the office for coffee snobbery. When not working on making space work for humanity, he tries to perfect his wife's favourite dish, Peruvian chicken, or runs obstacle courses around the southwest of England.

Josh speaks about the journey of the entrepreneur, raising capital, how to translate engineering into something digestible, what it feels like to lose a satellite, and about the resilience needed to bounce back after failures while building generationally defining technologies. He articulates what is needed to move from 0 to 1 in two of the most complex technologies we have (semiconductors and satellites) and what can be achieved in building a Rest of the World team with 23 different nationalities, working together on one mission, in an industrial estate in Cardiff.

Josh's talks are filled with humour and the very human elements of what it takes to work on the spacecraft whizzing above us at 15,000mph. *Quite literally, bringing space back down to Earth.*

Josh is available through DBA Speakers. To check Josh's diary, please call Diana Boulter at DBA Speakers on 07554 440537 or email diana@dbaspeakers.com