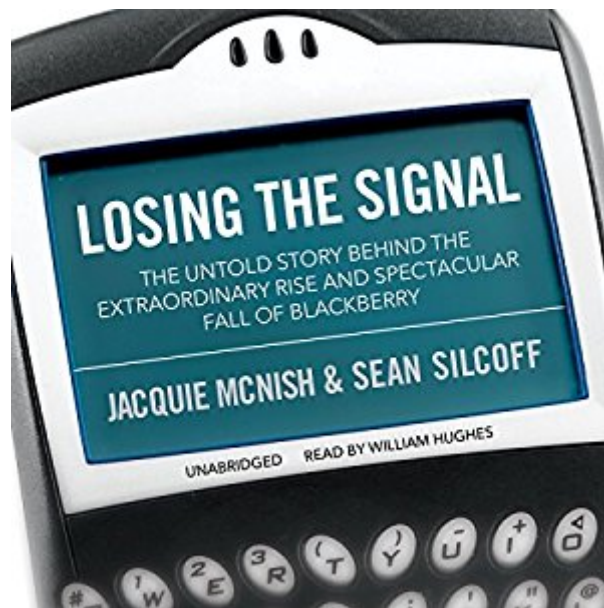


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# Losing The Signal: The Untold Story Behind The Extraordinary Rise And Spectacular Fall Of BlackBerry



## Synopsis

In 2009, BlackBerry controlled half of the smartphone market. Today that number is one percent. What went so wrong? *Losing the Signal* is a riveting story of a company that toppled global giants before succumbing to the ruthlessly competitive forces of Silicon Valley. This is not a conventional tale of modern business failure by fraud and greed. The rise and fall of BlackBerry reveals the dangerous speed at which innovators race along the information superhighway. With unprecedented access to key players, senior executives, directors, and competitors, *Losing the Signal* unveils the remarkable rise of a company that started above a bagel shop in Ontario. At the heart of the story is an unlikely partnership between a visionary engineer, Mike Lazaridis, and an abrasive Harvard Business School grad, Jim Balsillie. Together they engineered a pioneering pocket email device that became the tool of choice for presidents and CEOs. The partnership enjoyed only a brief moment on top of the world, however. At the very moment BlackBerry was ranked the world's fastest-growing company, internal feuds and chaotic growth crippled the company as it faced its gravest test: Apple and Google's entry into mobile phones. Expertly told by acclaimed journalists Jacquie McNish and Sean Silcoff, this is an entertaining, whirlwind narrative that goes behind the scenes to reveal one of the most compelling business stories of the new century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The rise and fall of RIM. RIM rode technology disruption and created a company with \$20 billion/year

in revenue only to see it disappear by being disrupted themselves. Lots of lessons here. 1) Even though the CEOs were reading the "Innovators Dilemma" they still had little perspective on how rapid disruption would happen to them. And even less of an understanding what to do about it. (The attempt to integrate the QNX software into existing products is a cautionary tale of technical debt, refactoring and plain bad engineering management.) The iPhone in 2007 should have been a wake-up call to both CEOs. Yet they both fell prey to the classic "disruption always looks like a toy to the incumbents" mistake. 2) The company grew past the management skills of the founders. The insular nature of the founders, the Canadian entrepreneurial ecosystem, founder hubris and a feckless board ended any potential of a positive intervention. It took a complete meltdown to get the board to act. 3) Mike Lazaridis, the technical CEO, fell prey to the "shiny object" syndrome. He discovered new technology (QNX) that he thought obsoleted the current software that drove the Blackberry handsets (Java). But instead of figuring out how to finesse the transition, he literally abandoned the existing development team (and revenue). A great example of how not to manage a technology transition. 3) Dealing with major platform disruption usually takes radical structural changes, not new product features. The story unfolds as a slow motion car crash as the CEOs waited, way, way too long to recognize, let alone deal with it. There's a reason that turnaround CEO's downsize companies and focus on what's important.

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