



Growing the BlackBerry Bumper Crop: Why RIM Thrives in Canada's Technology Triangle



More than 20 years ago, University of Waterloo student Mike Lazaridis started a small company called Research In Motion (RIM). Since then, he has made two big discoveries: the first was the technology that sparked the birth of the BlackBerry; the second was that everything he needed to build a global, multi-billion dollar company could be found in Waterloo Region, Ontario.

BACKGROUND

There are millions of people around the world who depend on BlackBerry – a product that didn't even exist until 1999. This innovative little wireless device not only changed the lives of its users, it catapulted Research In Motion, the Waterloo-based organization that invented and manufactures it, into world-wide hyper-growth.

During fiscal 2008 alone, RIM's revenue grew by 98% to over \$6.01 billion. At one point in November 2007, RIM had a market capitalization of \$69.1 billion, surpassing the Royal Bank of Canada as the most valuable company in Canada.

Founded in 1984 by Mike Lazaridis, a University of Waterloo student, RIM today is a premier brand in wireless solutions for the worldwide mobile communications market. RIM technologies provide customers with seamless access to time-sensitive information including email, phone, SMS messaging, Internet and intranet-based applications.

With offices in North America, Europe, Latin America and Asia Pacific, RIM has approximately 10,000 employees including approximately 2,900 employees in research and development. Corporate headquarters, R&D labs and manufacturing facilities are spread over 20 buildings in Waterloo, Ontario.

RIM continues to expand with new products and services, adding camera, multimedia and GPS capabilities to the BlackBerry line of smartphones. BlackBerry is available from 400 carriers and distribution partners in 150 countries around the world.

CANADA'S TECHNOLOGY TRIANGLE

Canada's Technology Triangle, encompassing the communities of Waterloo Region, Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, is located in southern Ontario, approximately one hour west of Toronto.

With a population of a half-million people, Waterloo Region is Ontario's 4th and Canada's 10th largest urban area.

More than 400 high-tech, advanced manufacturing and global service companies call the Region home including RIM, Toyota Manufacturing Canada, Automation Tooling Systems (ATS), Christie Digital, DALSA, Descartes Systems Group, Manulife Financial, Northern Digital Inc. (NDI), Open Text, Sandvine, MKS and Raytheon.

Three of Canada's top universities are located in the region along with many leading research institutes such as the Perimeter Institute, the Institute of Quantum Computing, the Centre for Applied Cryptographic Research and the Institute of Logical Programming and Artificial Intelligence.

In 2007 Waterloo was named the "Top Intelligent Community" in the world by the U.S.-based Intelligent Community Forum (ICF).

THE CHALLENGE

RIM provides complex and sophisticated products and services in a highly competitive global industry. Market demand is soaring. Attracting and retaining the right people with the right skills – technical, production, financial, customer service, management – is key to delivering high-quality products and services during a period of exponential growth by both the company and the industry.

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THE SOLUTION

Ontario, with its recognized academic institutions, initiatives focused on technology and innovation and skilled workforce, has provided RIM with great candidates to grow its organization. In fact, RIM is the largest private-sector employer of co-op students in Canada.

WHY CANADA'S TECHNOLOGY TRIANGLE?

Ontario offers innovative companies like RIM what they need to thrive in competitive global markets: highly skilled people, advanced manufacturing capabilities, easy access to premier markets, exceptional support for R&D and globally competitive business costs.

- Ontario's network of 44 universities and colleges produces 29,000 graduates every year in mathematics, engineering and science. The University of Waterloo is internationally renowned for computer sciences.
- We know how to design, build and maintain sophisticated manufacturing operations. Dozens of world-leading companies have invested billions in Ontario during the past few years.
- Ontario is part of the \$15+ trillion NAFTA market. There are 135 million consumers within a day's drive of the Greater Toronto Area.
- We help businesses contain costs. Ontario's combined federal-provincial corporate income tax rate for manufacturers is more than three percentage points below the U.S. average – and by 2012 it will be almost ten percentage points lower. In December 2007, the Ontario government introduced a groundbreaking \$3-billion package of business tax savings, infrastructure funding and investments in skills training that will help our companies compete even more successfully in global markets.

For more information on how Ontario can help you grow your business, please contact us at:

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Ontario Ministry of International Trade and Investment
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Canada's Technology Triangle
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