

Cory Smith

Enterprise AI strategist, founder of Signal & Horizon, and author of *Shoot. Ready. Aim.*



ABOUT CORY

AI initiatives rarely fail on the technology. They fail on adoption.

Cory Smith has built enterprise AI from the inside and advised it from the outside. Over 28 years he has led digital, innovation and operating-model change for dozens of organizations, including Fortune 500 companies in highly regulated industries.

At Aflac he helped found Hatch, the company's innovation lab, along with its Innovation Accelerator and Emerging Technologies Incubator, and served as interim chair of its Emerging Technologies Oversight and Governance Council. As VP of Customer Transformation at FPT Software, he led the North American Digital Transformation practice. Earlier, he held agency-side digital leadership roles and founded the digital function at the American Le Mans Series.

Today he runs Signal & Horizon, a Denver-based advisory firm that helps leadership teams turn AI ambition into real enterprise capability. He created the Ideas to Initiatives to Outcomes (IIO) workshop and writes about enterprise AI at signalandhorizon.substack.com.

AT A GLANCE

28+ years

in enterprise innovation and transformation

Dozens

of organizations, including Fortune 500 companies

4 books

on AI, innovation and organizational change

19 stages

in four countries, including AWS re:Invent and Collision

Denver, Colorado

speaks worldwide, in person and remote

1 The Pilots That Die Quietly

Why capable organizations keep buying AI transformations they aren't built to absorb, and the unglamorous work, done in the right order, that gets AI out of pilots and into production. Drawn from *Shoot. Ready. Aim.*

For CEOs, CIOs, COOs and boards · insurance, healthcare and financial services versions

2 Judgment Debt

Every time AI does work a person used to think through, the organization borrows against its own judgment. Where the debt builds up, how to measure it, and how to pay it down before something unusual happens and nobody has the reps to handle it.

For leadership teams, HR and talent leaders, universities

3 Intent Before Solutions

Tie every AI and innovation initiative to a measurable business outcome before anyone picks a tool. Built on Cory's Ideas to Initiatives to Outcomes (IIO) method, also available as a facilitated workshop of up to three days.

For strategy, innovation and transformation teams

Ask Cory about

TV · RADIO · PODCASTS · PRESS

Why AI projects stall

"AI initiatives rarely fail on the technology. They fail on adoption."

Pilot purgatory

"The pilots die quietly while the press releases live on."

AI agents and accountability

"If nobody can shut it down at 2 a.m., nobody owns it."

Governance

"Governance done right is an accelerator, not a brake."

AI hype and spending

"The technology is real. That's exactly what makes the rush dangerous."

AI and entry-level jobs

"Every task AI takes from a junior employee is a rep they don't get."

AI and the bottom line

"Fund outcomes, not pilots."

Hype cycles

"The logos change. The challenges don't."

Selected stages

1997 TO 2026

Feb 2026	Plug and Play Tech Center · The Future of Physical AI, with Google Cloud and Microsoft	Panel
Jun 2025	DataBank IMX Innovation Day · AI, Data and the Future of Everything	Keynote
Nov 2023	AWS re:Invent , Las Vegas · GenAI and the Complexities of Data Privacy	GenAI track keynote
Jun 2022	Collision Conference , Toronto · Web3, the Metaverse and the Future of Web Technologies	Keynote
2018, 2019	Microsoft CXO Summit · Demystifying Digital Transformation; Business Agility	Keynotes
2018	IADA, SupermarketSense, Kettering Group · digital transformation and CX	Keynotes
Oct 2014	SouthWired · Why Agencies Suck at Digital	Track keynote
Apr 2012	American Marketing Association · Email Isn't Dead: eCRM and Marketing Automation	Keynote
Dec 2007	Automobile Club de l'Ouest , Le Mans · Digitizing the Racing Experience	Track keynote
Oct 2006	Sports Marketing Association · Sports in the Digital Era	Keynote
Nov 2000	Newspaper Society (UK) New Media Conference , Solihull · Wireless Content Delivery	Keynote
1997 to 1999	Earlier talks at COMDEX International (Miami), NewsCom (UK), The Art Institute (Houston) and Bite Expo	

Plus main-stage keynotes to large internal audiences at Aflac enterprise gatherings.

BOOKS

Shoot. Ready. Aim.

How the AI Industry Sold Everyone a Revolution Nobody Was Ready For (2026). Amazon new-release bestseller in its launch week.

Beautifully Human · *Lean Innovation* · *Wired for Change*

FORMATS

Keynotes of 30 to 45 minutes, panels and moderation, half-day to three-day executive workshops, and interviews for TV, radio, podcasts and press. Remote-ready, including overnight slots for European and Asian outlets.

Book Cory

SPEAKING INQUIRIES

signalandhorizon.com/speaking

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NEWSLETTER

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