



Promotion Optimization Institute, LLC

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# POI 2020 TPx Vendor Panorama

Deloitte Consulting LLP

Polaris™



**Analysis of Representative Vendors**

**NEW**

**Deloitte Polaris** [deloitte.com/polaris](https://deloitte.com/polaris)

*New vendor to  
the TPx Vendor  
Panorama*

**Profile:** Polaris is Deloitte's global Revenue Management platform that offers Revenue Management, predictive modeling, and TPO capabilities.

**Geographic presence:** North America (55%), Europe (36%), Asia/Pacific/Africa (9%).

**Total consumer goods users (seats):** ~550.

**Tiers represented:** Tier 1.

**Solution offerings:** RGM, developing and piloting TPO.

**Major product sub-segments not covered:** Tobacco, Pharma OTC, and Consumer semi-durables.

**Data Management:** Deloitte brings deep expertise in data cleansing, harmonization, and enrichment to help clients use raw data from disparate systems to create a usable data repository to enable analytics in Polaris. This is offered as a supplemental service.

**RGM Analytics:** Polaris was developed by Deloitte with clients through their RGM consulting services practice, so it is deep with real experience. Deloitte has effectively simplified RGM analytics, not in a way that dilutes the data or analysis, but rather in a way that makes it simple to digest and take action on the insights. Polaris includes a robust engine of predictive analytics that includes decomposition of demand into price, promotion, and other causal drivers. This enables predictive suggestions for users in the tool based on use cases such as price simulation, promotion scenario modeling, pre-event analysis, and trade plan optimization. Users can set revenue and profit targets and bring marketing components into the calendar to assist in planning and evaluation. The analytics are very visual and interactive. There are simple filters, the use of lassos, and the ability to see snapshots as you hover over data. The ability to eliminate outliers using sliders for the x and y axis is really nice. We also like the Benchmark Waterfall chart that bridges from the consumer price to contribution margin and compares to a benchmark (such as channel or category or algorithmically determined segmentation).

POI likes the question-based decision workflow approach that takes the guesswork out of analytics and allows configuration to a CPG organizations RGM playbook. Questions are broken into several categories and the further you drill down into the questions, the more detailed the questions become. The answers to the question trail are revealed in the analytics and the user knows exactly what to look for as they dig deeper based on the platform and hands-on training delivered by the Deloitte team. We see this being tremendous in the way of enabling clients to build an analysis capability within their own organization vs. building a dependence on consultancy support to help interpret the RGM analytics. The approach they take to training also encourages independence for the user as "help" is embedded in the tool itself. As a subscription service, live support is also included if needed.

Polaris has a Trade Promotion Optimization module that is in co-development with several clients. The goal of this tool is to use advanced AI methods to generate predictive and prescriptive analytics for the automated production of the optimal promotional plans.

**Configuration/Customization:** Customization and configuration are both available and utilized. Most instances are highly customized to the needs of the client. Configuration to the client's specific culture is common across instances, supporting the drive for user adoption.

**Technology architecture/delivery options:** On-premise, private cloud. Can be delivered as a solution or also as part of an RGM consulting services engagement.

**Service partners:** Deloitte Consulting.

**Technology partners:** Amazon Web Services (hosting), Keycloak (user management).

**User experience:** Polaris is extremely intuitive in nature and as such, simple to navigate. The clean look of the landing pages and dashboards is very approachable. The multiple ways reports and analytics can be reached is helpful for varying user preferences. We really like the question led approach to analytics. Users simply click on the question they want to answer and appropriate analytics are the result. This is beneficial in many ways but we see it as an easy way to aid in socializing insights throughout the organization. There are pop up boxes when users hover over data points and the filters on the side bars allow for quick viewing. Throughout the application, there is the capability to bookmark and share a particular configuration of report, thus enabling collaboration between users. This is a simple way to drive decision and consensus among users.

#### **Select TPx Capabilities:**

**Baseline:** Polaris generates its own baseline. Phantom spikes are tracked and evaluated against syndicated data. Regression models are used in RGM and random forecast models and gradient models are leveraged in TPO analytics.

**Vendor trend:** Deloitte continues to grow the capabilities of Polaris, making it a very tangible solution for CPG. We see they have years of expertise embedded into this product and the RGM suite is excellent. With keen insight into issues manufacturers face, we see the potential to provide them with very relevant solutions.

**Strengths:** Deloitte is the driving force behind Polaris. As a result of their deep-seated TPx, TPO, and RGM expertise, they have built a rich RGM reporting and analytics platform. They combine robust data management and sector specific analytics to help organizations proactively optimize commercial decision making. The decision-oriented workflows and guided navigation are unique and strong.

**Challenges:** Polaris has limited reach thus far in the market. We see this as more an opportunity than a challenge, however, as it is a very robust RGM offering. As manufacturers gain visibility to the offering, we are certain they will see the merit. Polaris has a strong focus on RGM, yet the platform does not include traditional TPM capabilities of a single enterprise wide TPx solution at this time.

**Adjacent offerings:** Data Management and Cleansing support. Also, Consulting services by Deloitte.

**Key differentiators:** The decision workflow, facilitated by leading questions within Polaris is a nice differentiator. This approach is unique in driving to answers and helps to enable users to become more independent in revenue management. Additionally, Deloitte's embedded IP in RGM for Consumer product companies and the keen data management offering is very strong.

**Outlook & prognosis:** We see the Revenue Management platform Polaris offers to be very strong, and we think it has potential to lead in the market and globally, especially as Deloitte successfully develops the TPO module. We also see great potential with the Trade Promotion Optimization offering, but the ability to integrate with any TPM platform will be necessary to gain scale. The change management that is offered with the Deloitte deployments, in addition to the training and support embedded in the solution are needed in the industry and will help to create long term success.

**Evaluate Polaris when:** You are looking for an excellent RGM suite with decision workflow driven analytics around Revenue Growth Management.

**Avoid Polaris if:** You are looking for transactional TPM or are looking for time-tested advanced TPO capabilities.

**Distinctions:** POI Best-in-Class for Internal Collaboration and RGM.

## About the Author

**Pam Brown** is POI's Chief Commercial Officer. In this role, she creates and executes POI strategy, advisory, and research. She elevates practices and CPG and Retailer relationships. Pam began her career executing at retail, and through promotions advanced to leading retail execution & key account teams for Unilever. For Kayser-Roth she led all Sales and Broker teams west of the Mississippi. In her 13 years with Del Monte, she carried many roles. She was the Director of Sales Strategy and Operations, which included: Sales Systems and Reporting, Sales Operations, BI Analytics, Sales Training, and Sales Policy. Pam's final role at Del Monte was the Director of IT Governance and PMO, which included planning and leading enterprise wide technology engagements. Pam has current, extensive knowledge in TPM, TPO, ROI, Revenue Management, Advanced Analytics, Change Management, Sales and Sales Effectiveness, Demand Planning, Supply Chain, Organizational Effectiveness and other relevant best practices areas. Over the years she has researched, designed, and deployed Enterprise wide solutions to meet business needs. She understands how to execute and gain user adoption of new systems for physical retail and eCommerce. She has advised solutions providers on enhancements to core capabilities and partnered with other CPG manufacturers to share, learn, and drive best practices in today's challenging retail and consumer goods environment for mutual benefit.



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## About the Promotion Optimization Institute

POI brings together manufacturers, retailers, solution providers, analysts, academics, and other industry leaders with the specific objective of collaboratively improving the promotion and distribution of consumer goods. Members of POI share cross-functional best practices in both structured and informal settings.

Additionally, members benefit through our industry alliances, the Certified Collaborative Marketer (CCM)<sup>TM</sup> program, and industry-leading summits around the globe.

POI aims to instill a financial and metrics-based discipline not typically found with other trade groups. The goal of our innovative approach is collaborative promotion optimization. The focus is on the customer/shopper through sales, marketing, and merchandising strategies.

Executive advisory boards keep us apprised of industry needs and help us provide desired outcomes for members, sponsors, and academia.



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