

THE PROMOTION OPTIMIZATION INSTITUTE'S

2026 CONSUMER GOODS VENDOR PANORAMA

THE GUIDE TO ENTERPRISE PLANNING & RETAIL EXECUTION



Demand Chain AI

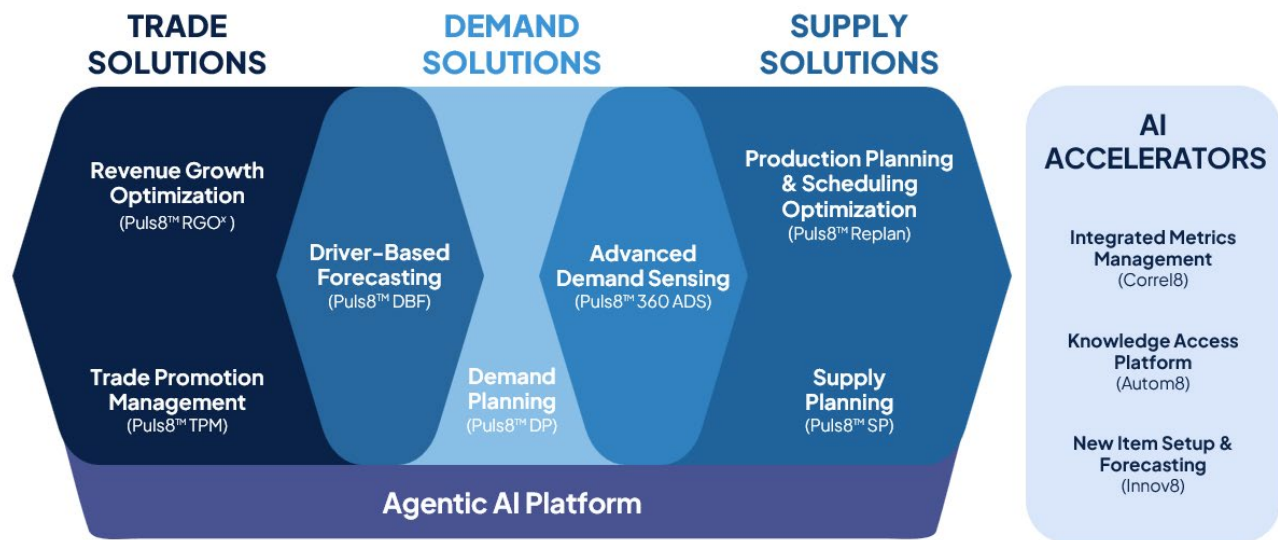
 [Demand Chain AI Website](#)



Vendor Profile: Demand Chain AI is a software, consulting, and managed services company helping Consumer Packaged Goods manufacturers improve planning performance through AI-powered technology and operational expertise. Its Puls8 Intelligent Planning Solutions platform delivers integrated capabilities across demand planning, supply planning, production scheduling, advanced demand sensing, trade promotion management, and revenue growth optimization, helping manufacturers improve forecast accuracy, optimize inventory, and drive better business decisions. With over 1,500 years of collective industry experience, the firm offers expert consulting services tailored to its clients' needs, ranging from strategic advisory and agentic AI to change management, advanced analytics, hands-on managed services, and intelligent enterprise planning.

Enterprise Planning Solution Offerings: TPMx, RGM Trade Optimization, including What-if Promotion Scenarios and Advanced Analytics.

Demand Chain AI Ecosystem Graphic:



SOX Certifications: The solution leverages the Salesforce framework, which can be made SOX-compliant. Puls8 RGOx is in the process of attaining SOX compliance.

Major Industries/Product Sub-Segments Not Covered: Currently, Food and Beverage, along with Pet Food, are the sub-segments covered.

Data Management: Demand Chain AI offers consulting services, including data cleansing, maintenance, and support, to accelerate progress toward advanced analytics and systems.

Digital Content Management: N/A.

Analytics Modeling: Demand Chain AI utilizes proprietary modeling techniques, including log-log econometric regression models, random forests, and neural networks.

Generative AI/Chatbot Assistant/Agentic AI: Puls8 Solutions deploys AI agents that allow users to build promotions from natural-language prompts. The agent builds the promotion header, applies error checking, and validates that the promotion fits within guardrails, and it can move promotions from status to status. A mobile AI-driven promotion-building app lets users create promotions on the road or in front of a customer while staying in sync with the core platform. Within claims, AI agents align backup data to customers and products, surface the promotions that most closely match the customer, product, and timing, and learn from each confirmed match to improve future auto-matching.

Baseline Creation: Demand Chain AI's preferred method is to import a baseline from demand planning. To manually create a baseline, previous year's sales can be used as a starting point. The volume for the promoted periods is replaced by the average volume for the two weeks preceding and following the promotion. The remaining unpromoted volumes are averaged using a 4-week moving average. The volume for new SKUs is either imported from brand marketing or demand planning, or a similar/proxy product/item/SKU is designated. That product's volume is copied into the baseline. The baseline can then be reduced at the PPG level, and the fair share for all SKUs under the PPG can be adjusted to account for PPG cannibalization.

Enterprise Planning Capabilities:

(TPMx, RGM Trade Optimization (Puls8 RGOx) including What-if Promotion Scenarios, and Advanced Analytics)

Geographic Presence: North America (100%), Europe (0%), Asia-Pacific/Africa (0%).

Total Consumer Goods Users (Seats): TPMx: 10-50. RGM (Puls8 RGOx): 6-8. Total EPx seats: ~20.

Tiers Represented: Tier 1 (50%), Tier 2 (50%), Tier 3 (0%).

Headquarter Capabilities: Reporting is available at a headquarters level within the solution.

Marketing: Marketing events can be planned as promotions to increase cross-functional visibility during the planning process.

Trade Promotion Management (TPMx): Demand Chain AI's Salesforce-native platform delivers robust functionality across all critical areas of trade promotion. It combines intelligent forecasting, planning, and execution with real-time ROI analysis and advanced capabilities in analytics, AI, and user-centric design. There are no restrictions on customer hierarchies, enabling robust reporting. TPM capabilities are simple to use, straightforward, and meet the critical requirements manufacturers need. They can manage price tiers and deal caps on either sell-in or sell-out volume. The tactics are robust, offering options such as BOGO, multiples, or free goods. Display planning is possible with the BOM dispersion down the product hierarchy. There are standard reports and dashboards that planners can use to analyze sales and promotional data. Deep industry expertise has driven the development of an effective planning mechanism for distributors and wholesalers. The system supports three levels of promotion planning: Funds and Programs are planned at the Grandparent level; promotions (volumes, spends, accruals, and GL postings) are planned at the Parent level; and claims (actualization) are submitted and matched at the Child level. Deduction and claims management have automated elements, and the system can split claims. For 2026, the multi-level hierarchy extends beyond two-stage distributor structures, supporting additional tiers, many-to-many distributor relationships, fractional ownership, and percentage tables that push national promotions, including net cost planning, down to each distributor. Approvers do not need a license; approval requests are emailed with full financials and can be approved from any device, with updates flowing back in real time. Auto-generated promotion names improve AI deduction matching, and approvals produce a retailer-ready deal summary PDF. Dummy products enable planning ahead of ERP master data, linking automatically once items are released. On claims, a staging queue matches nightly and auto-creates claim and payment records, while bots and a new broker feed (e.g., Acosta Relay) retrieve worked deductions for GL posting.

TPMx User Experience (UX): The look and feel of Demand Chain AI's TPM solution is simple, stepwise, and easy to navigate. It was designed to be user-friendly and logical, which aids in user adoption. The Gantt calendar functionality for visualizing the promotion calendar is user-friendly and functional. The system architecture eliminates the need for middleware, optimizing processing speed. The 2026 release adds configurable, role-based home dashboards built from a library of widgets, each hyperlinked to its underlying report, so users land on the views that matter to their role. Reporting is embedded in the promotion build, giving planners a full view of spend, ROI, and scenarios without needing to jump to additional tabs. The calendar supports drag-and-drop date changes that recalculate all financials in real time, views across prior, current, and next year, and customer-specific week definitions so planning aligns with each retailer's calendar. Scenario planning enables side-by-side variants with variance comparison and one-click promotion of the preferred deal into the calendar.

Advanced Analytics Capabilities: Advanced analytics provides complete transparency into forecasts and embedded scorecards for accurate tracking. Real-time promotion scenario simulations support trade spend optimization. AI-driven insights empower users to drive revenue growth and improve forecast reliability. A suite of available dashboards is linked to the reporting layer. Demand Chain AI configures all dashboards and reports with the client during the design phase, utilizing their practitioners' best practices and experience. Each robust dashboard includes a link at the bottom of the applet that users can use to explore the details and data in greater depth. An AI agent can calculate lift tables from historical promotions and POS data, or clients can import their own lift tables.

Revenue Growth Management: RGM is executed at Demand Chain AI via elements of one of the RGM pillars. Puls8 RGOx, Demand Chain AI's trade promotion optimization engine, is now in market. Puls8 RGOx either generates econometric lift and effectiveness models or ingests a client's existing models, then applies a proprietary AI simulation engine to evaluate scenarios against the client's goals within a configurable constraint matrix. Users define hard and soft constraint profiles, with localized constraints down to the PPG, retailer, or PPG and retailer combination, and the optimizer produces a full-year promotion calendar. Planners can clone child plans for retailer-level refinement, pin promotions in place, protect weeks, model price changes, and track actualized performance with on-track and off-track alerting.

Advanced Analytics User Experience (UX): The UX is straightforward and logical. Additionally, Salesforce CRM Analytics is not required for reporting; however, it can be used for enhanced visualization capabilities and regression analysis.

Global Deployment Enablement: The Salesforce platform offers multi-language auto-translation and multi-currency conversion capabilities, along with a system that enables configuration at the county/market level, allowing any market or account within a market to have its own business rules and logic, all within a single instance. Demand Chain AI takes pride in its ability to deploy quickly across multiple markets and regions.

Integrated Business Planning (IBP): Demand Chain AI can receive forecasted baselines or total volume forecasts from the IBP process and then predict promotional volumes based on this data. The system offers flexibility in data utilization, allowing users to either pass the promo volumes back to IBP or pass the promo conditions to IBP, enabling Demand Planning to forecast promotion volumes. This data is then passed back to the TPM system. They can also provide promo volume and spend alerts to the IBP team. Puls8 DBF (driver-based forecasting) supports IBP alignment across commercial, supply chain, finance, and executive teams, letting executives work with demand drivers to shape and scope future demand.

Foodservice: Although Demand Chain AI is not explicitly designed for managing Foodservice, standard capabilities are available for planning within the solution.

Configuration/Customization: Demand Chain AI can provide enhancement configuration requests within a week, and it's possible to deploy these changes to a single client.

Technology Architecture/Delivery Options: Demand Chain AI operates end-to-end on the Salesforce core architecture for Puls8 TPM, with 100% of TPM data stored in Salesforce core, eliminating the need for middleware. It's a multi-tenant cloud platform featuring configurable data models to support diverse business requirements. AI and machine learning are embedded across core functions, including forecasting, demand sensing, optimization, and prescriptive recommendations. There is no limitation on the number of years held in the system, but most clients have 2 years of historical data and the current year. This enables continuous intelligence. The platform is delivered via SaaS with Salesforce Lightning integration, ensuring accessibility and scalability. Puls8 RGOx is built on AWS and is configurable to other cloud providers; its integrated data layer for Puls8 solutions was upgraded in Q1 2026. Salesforce Shield, including Platform Encryption, Event Monitoring, and Field Audit Trail, is available and applies to 100% of TPM data.

Service Partners: N/A.

Technology Partners: Salesforce.com, AWS, Arete.

Strengths and Key Differentiators: Demand Chain AI's approach to delivery is through their practitioner-led service, rooted in real-world operational expertise. Its unified Puls8 platform bridges strategy and execution, enabling coordination across the entire demand chain. The Salesforce-native Trade Promotion Management (TPM) system is highly configurable, quick to deploy, and purpose-built for the unique needs of CPG companies. AI integration powers demand shaping, promotion planning, and execution. The offering combines strategic advisory, hands-on execution, and flexible managed services to drive immediate impact and long-term value. New differentiators include the flexible multi-level hierarchy, which admins can update without change orders, and customer-specific planning units, allowing a club plan in pallets, convenience in eaches, and grocery in cases so sellers plan the way they sell.

Opportunities: The depth of expertise within the Demand Chain AI team is promising. The opportunity for Demand Chain AI is time. Only time is needed for this experienced team to develop the robust capabilities they want to bring to market. The team understands the industry's needs and is working to meet them. In just over 2.5 years, they have delivered a substantial TPMx offering and have now brought the Puls8 RGOx optimization engine to market. The next opportunity is to scale adoption of Puls8 RGOx, deepen starting-point guidance to reduce clicks in day-to-day planning, and expand into additional sub-segments beyond Food, Beverage, and Pet Food.

Vendor Trends and Outlook: Although Demand Chain AI is relatively new to the market, it brings a passion and zeal for meeting the needs of manufacturers today. Their expertise and capabilities that cater to manufacturers' demand management needs are unique and will provide value to their clients. They also offer managed services that can provide clients with a quick route to value. With RGM optimization now delivered through Puls8 RGOx, the roadmap focuses on shipment confirmation notifications that alert sales when customer orders vary from the TPM plan, stacked year-over-year calendar views, and support for three-tier alcoholic beverage distribution expected by the end of 2026. The team's pattern of listening to what customers need and shipping improvements within weeks continues to set them apart.

Adjacent Offerings: Demand Planning (Puls8 DP), Supply Planning (Puls8 SP), Driver-Based Forecasting (Puls8 DBF), Advanced Demand Sensing (Puls8 360 ADS), Consulting, Managed Services.

Evaluate Demand Chain AI Enterprise Planning When: You are seeking a connected solution for forecasting, planning, trade management, and execution. With Demand Chain AI's managed services, manufacturers can access practitioner-level support to augment their internal teams across the entire demand chain. Manufacturers seeking AI-driven trade optimization with practical, constraint-bounded recommendations should also consider Puls8 RGOx.

POI's 2026 Best-in-Class Category Distinctions: Supply Chain Connectivity.

About the Authors



Pam Brown is POI's Chief Commercial Officer. In this role, she creates and executes the POI strategy, advisory, and research. She elevates practices and CPG and Retailer relationships.

Pam has over 30+ years in the CPG industry. She began her career in retail execution 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, ROI, Revenue Management, Advanced Analytics & Optimization, Change Management, Sales and Sales Effectiveness, Demand Planning, Supply Chain, Organizational Effectiveness, Sales Training, 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.

Pam Brown can be reached at pambrown@p-o-i.org or connect with her on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/pam-brown/>

About the Authors



Jack Harnedy is POI's EVP of Commercial Operations and Industry Research. In this role, he leads POI's industry research, including the annual Vendor Panorama and its Best-in-Class Category Distinctions, POI's State of the Industry Report, and serves as POI's Revenue Growth Management expert across advisory, training, and member programs.

Jack has over 25 years in the CPG industry, all on the manufacturer side. He built his career in sales, trade, and revenue management roles at Newell-Rubbermaid, Kimberly-Clark, Colgate, Hostess, and Smucker. Most recently he was Vice President of Revenue Growth Management at Nutrabolt, where he built, led, and grew the RGM Mindset and Function for the C4 Energy and Bloom brands. Jack has extensive knowledge in Revenue Growth Management, Pricing and Price-Pack Architecture, Trade Investment and TPMx, Retail Media, Retail Execution, Advanced Analytics, Agentic AI in commercial workflows, and Commercial Operating Model design. He has selected, deployed, and driven adoption of the platforms evaluated in this report, and he brings a practitioner's view of what it takes to turn capability into results.

At POI, Jack leads the U.S. RGM Share Group, delivers the RGM Training and Certifications, and advises manufacturers on RGM and TPMx strategy, vendor selection (via POI's 4-Phase advisory), and team design. He is the lead author of POI's upcoming white paper, The Next Phase of Revenue Management, which deep dives into Total Commercial Investment Optimization (TCIO). Jack is also the author of Snap & Go, which applies the discipline of competitive athletics to CPG commercial leadership, drawing on his years as a Division I long-snapper and offensive lineman at Northwestern University.

Jack Harnedy can be reached at jharnedy@p-o-i.org or connect with him on LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/in/jack-harnedy-4a43848

About the Authors



A special thank you to **Sarah Meyer**, who has been a POI Affiliate and partnered with Pam Brown on POI Manufacturer Advisory for over 7 years. She participates in the Enterprise Planning vendor process, supporting the creation of the document you have enjoyed. As a POI Affiliate, Sarah works with companies to optimize profit through effective planning, specifically in TPM and trade optimization. Sarah has over 20+ years of experience in the CPG and Food industry. She worked for 15 years with Rich Products Corporation, where she began her career in Finance and transitioned over to Sales to lead the trade management practice and TPM. She has led Sales Account Planning and business implementations of TPM process and technology. She has worked closely with Retailers to lead collaborative planning efforts and drive insights to change.

Marketing & Design



Madelyn Grau has led POI's marketing, communications, and design department since 2023. Under her leadership, the team has transformed POI's communications, including the weekly POI Pulse Newsletter, marketing for POI events and webinars, white papers, research reports, and more.

Madelyn led the visual development and execution of POI's 2026 Vendor Panorama, shaping the report's presentation from concept through publication. Her work ensures POI's extensive research and insights are presented in a polished, cohesive, and accessible format that makes the content easier to navigate, understand, and utilize. The continued evolution of the Vendor Panorama strengthens its value as a resource for leadership presentations, business cases, and strategic enterprise planning decisions.



Maya Miller joined POI in 2024 as Manager of Marketing and Communications. With a background in Marketing from Texas Tech University, she brings experience in content development, strategic communications, and market research.

She has been instrumental in the publication of POI's Vendor Panorama report by managing vendor communications, coordinating participation and deliverables, and overseeing aspects of the publication, launch, and promotion process.

If you haven't seen the new [POI Pulse Communication](#), please do. It contains details about upcoming POI events, webinars, research, and more. POI looks forward to supporting your journey.

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)[™] and RGM Foundation[™] programs, 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 Holistic Enterprise Planning. 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.

[Click Here For More Information](#)

POI Leadership



Michael Kantor

Chief Executive Officer - Founder
Promotion Optimization Institute

914-319-7309
mkantor@p-o-i.org



Pam Brown

Chief Commercial Officer - Partner
Promotion Optimization Institute

707-332-0450
pambrown@p-o-i.org



Jack Harnedy

EVP of Commercial Operations
and Industry Research
Promotion Optimization Institute

479-381-2820
jharnedy@p-o-i.org

All rights reserved, Promotion Optimization Institute, September 2026. No part of this material may be copied, photocopied, or duplicated in any form or by any means, redistributed, or used as a basis for consulting without the prior written consent of The Promotion Optimization Institute, LLC.