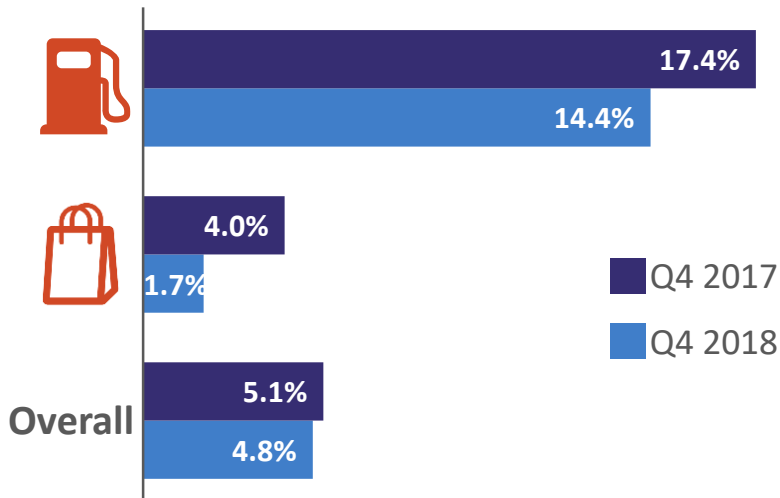


# U.S. Spending Snapshot

Q4 2018: Overall Spending Growth Remained Positive

## Year-Over-Year Spending Growth



Overall consumer spending growth remained strong in the final quarter of the year at 4.8% despite lower year-over-year gas prices which subdued overall spending growth.

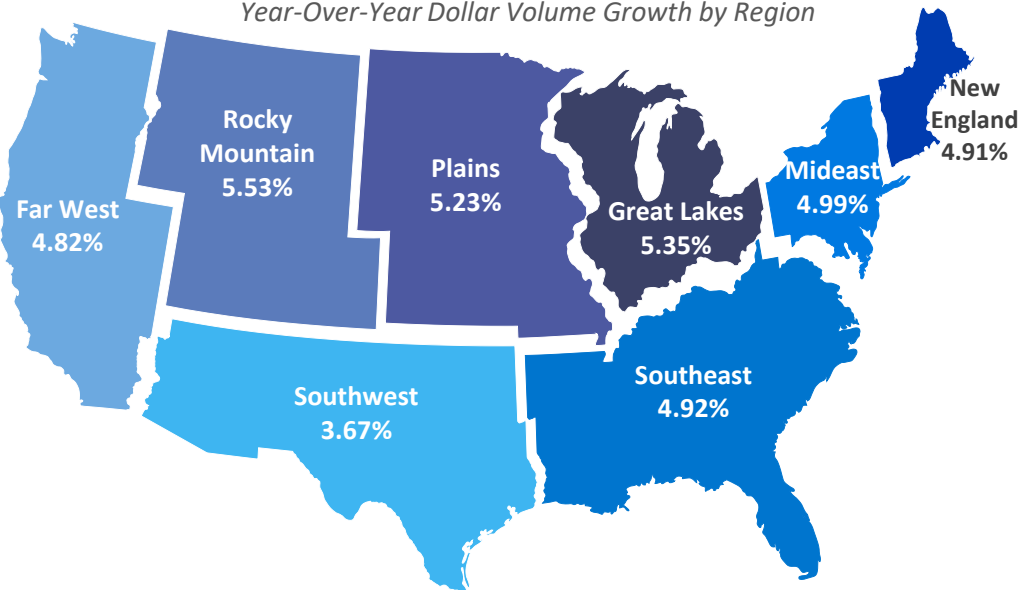
However, despite the lower prices at the pump, consumers did not reallocate these savings to discretionary items, and instead decided to pocket the savings. This was evidenced by the spike in personal savings rate in December which was close to a two-year high. Overall, the U.S. economy remains fairly strong despite the subdued growth in the retail category in the final quarter of the year.

## Spending Growth Snapshot by Region

From a sequential perspective, all key merchant categories experienced slower growth with the exception of the Hotel category.

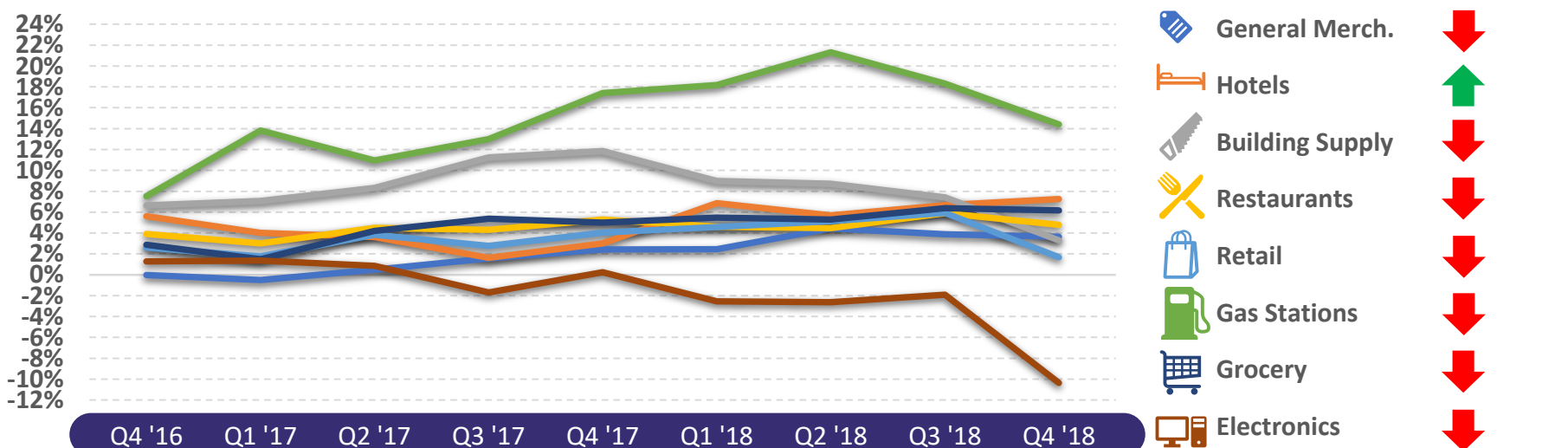
The growth in this category can be attributed to the overall increase in air travel, which fueled demand. In addition, Hotels have also been focused on increasing prices driven by supply and demand concerns with average rates increasing by 2% -3%. This trend is expected throughout 2019.

Year-Over-Year Dollar Volume Growth by Region



## Spending Growth Snapshot at Key Merchant Categories

Year-Over-Year Dollar Volume Growth (Same-store Sales Growth)



Q3 '18 vs Q4 '18

- General Merch. ↓
- Hotels ↑
- Building Supply ↓
- Restaurants ↓
- Retail ↓
- Gas Stations ↓
- Grocery ↓
- Electronics ↓

Data Source: TSG's Acquiring Industry Metrics (AIM) platform. AIM spans over 3.7 million U.S. merchants with \$1+ trillion of total annualized dollar volume from 13.8+ billion annualized payment transactions in order to provide a comprehensive look at same-store sales and consumer spending behavior by merchant categories and geographic breakdowns.

The Electronic Transactions Association (ETA) is the leading trade association for the payments industry, representing nearly 550 companies worldwide involved in electronic transaction processing products and services. The purpose of ETA is to influence, monitor, and shape the payments industry by providing leadership through education, advocacy, and the exchange of information.

The Strawhecker Group (TSG) is a fast-growing analytics and consulting firm focused on the electronic payments industry. The company serves the entire payments ecosystem, from fintech startups to Fortune 500 companies. The firm provides its clients with advisory services, research and analytics to help them plan and execute their strategic initiatives. Based in Omaha, a recognized payments industry hub, TSG is an established leader in this high-growth, ever-evolving space.