

**About the Consumer Spending Report**

The Chain Store Guide US Spending Monitor, Retail Spending Index and Restaurant Spending Index are monthly indexes of consumer spending intentions and capacity based on interviews with a random sample of 1,500 U.S. adults. In addition to questions about their retail, restaurant and other discretionary spending, the survey also asks consumers their opinions on the US economy and their personal finances.

**SPENDING ON THE RISE ACROSS THE BOARD**

**US CONSUMERS LOOK TO SHAKE OFF WINTER**

What a difference a couple of months makes! It's March, and American consumers appear to be warming to the idea that spending those hard-earned dollars is the way to go.

Last month, we noted that *volatility* is the key word to describe consumer sentiment and spending habits in 2019. And the large leaps we've seen as a result of polling through March have supported that assertion.

We saw large upswings across the board, and the CSG US Spending Monitor recorded the second largest two-month gain in its history. The Monitor is back from January's lows that ended a 3-month downtrend.

That trend anticipated the Commerce Department's announcement this month that December retail sales were down by -1.2%, the largest decline in 9 years and a shock to most observers. But we're proud to say that the CSG Spending Monitor saw it coming since November, which you can see below and read more about [here](#).

Inside this issue, we take a look at the bounce-back in consumer economic confidence that helped drive the up-tick in the Monitor, and we take a longer look at spending in the restaurant space and within various retail verticals.

CSG  
US Spending Monitor  
**124.1**

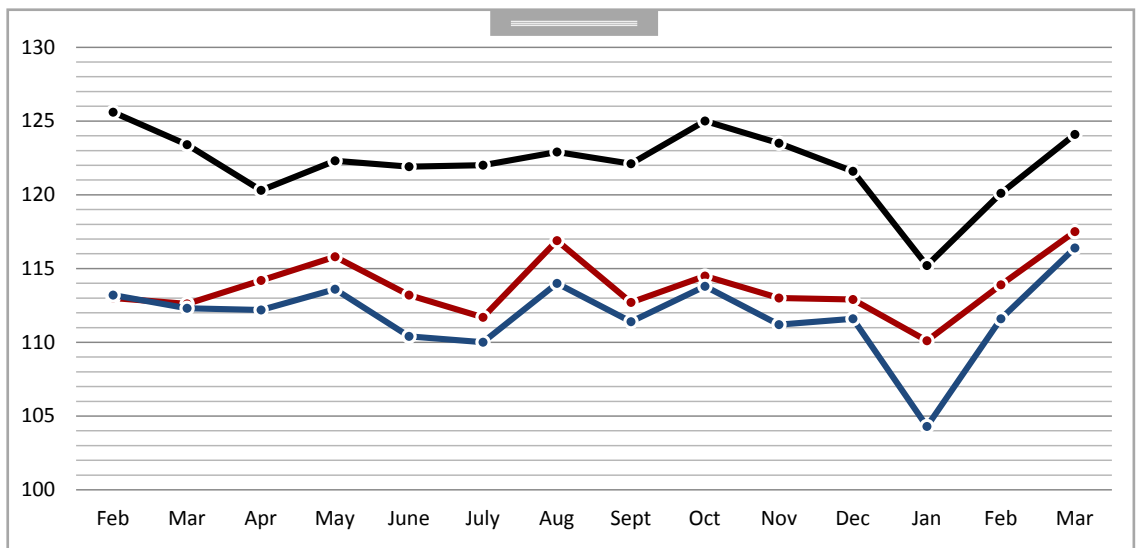
CSG  
Restaurant Spending Index  
**117.5**

CSG  
Retail Spending Index  
**116.4**

**ABOUT CSG**

For more than 80 years, Chain Store Guide (CSG) has been a leading provider of comprehensive and definitive retail and foodservice intelligence to businesses around the world.

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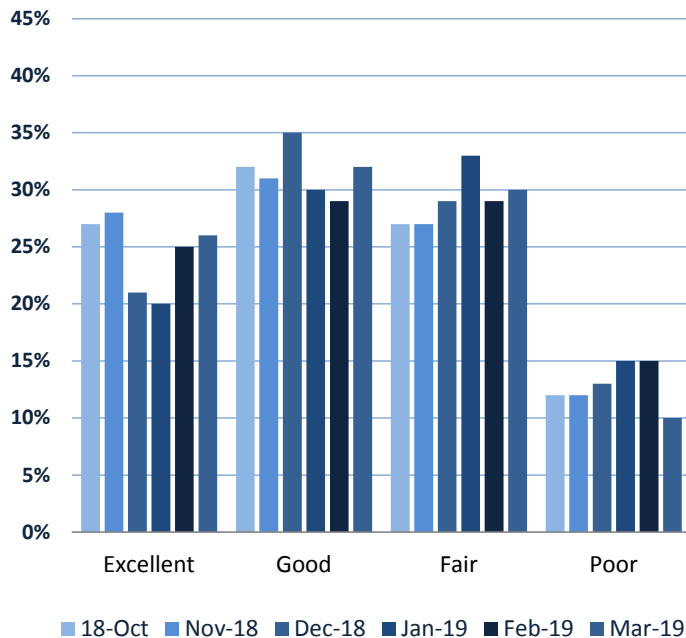


# TURNAROUND IN ECONOMIC CONFIDENCE DRIVES RESULTS

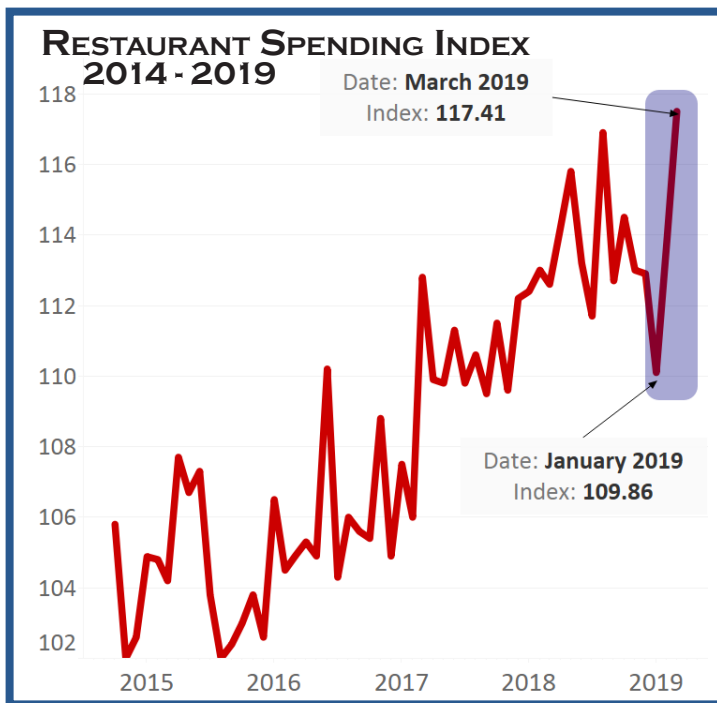
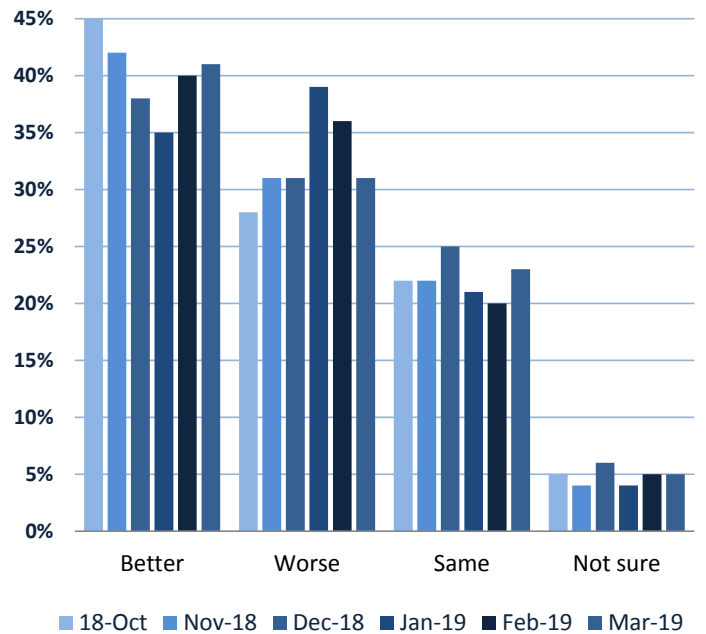
## PESSIMISTIC RESPONSES TO POLLING QUESTIONS RECEDE IN MARCH

In response to our requests to rate the US economy this month, more consumers felt it was excellent, good or fair, and a whole lot less were apt to characterize it as poor. Likewise, when asked whether the economy was getting better, worse or staying the same, the percent of respondents who felt it was getting worse was 31%, down from 39% in January, which was the highest tally in over a year. The 31% figure is much more in line with the average response for 2018.

### Q. RATE THE US ECONOMY.



### Q. IS THE ECONOMY GETTING BETTER OR WORSE?



## CSG RESTAURANT SPENDING INDEX REACHES ALL-TIME HIGH

After a 7+ point climb between January and March, Chain Store Guide's Restaurant Spending Index, which measures consumer intention and capacity to dine out, reached an all-time, nearly five-year high this month.

We're not alone in pointing out that Americans dining habits have changed over recent years, but our polling data - both the Index, itself, and the responses we receive to individual questions - paint a clear, quantitative picture.

While franchisees may fight with corporate, concepts may fail and restaurants might close, the long term trend is unambiguous, and as we noted last month, it may take a recession to ultimately test the theory that the longterm trend will continue.

Get More Leads & Drive More Sales With  
CSG's Restaurant Franchisee Premier Database

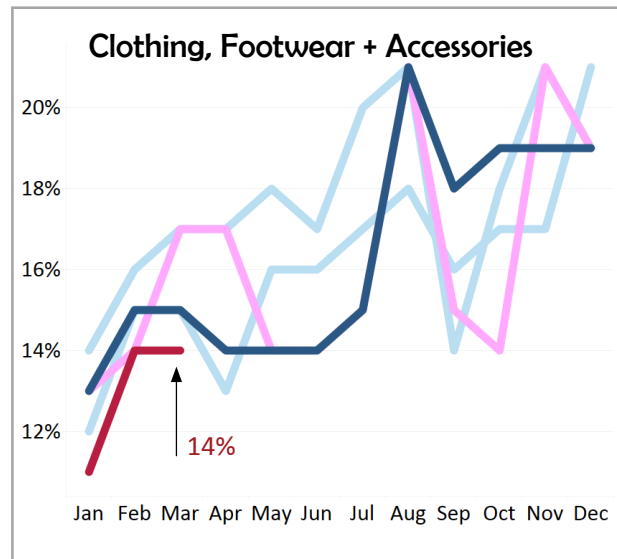
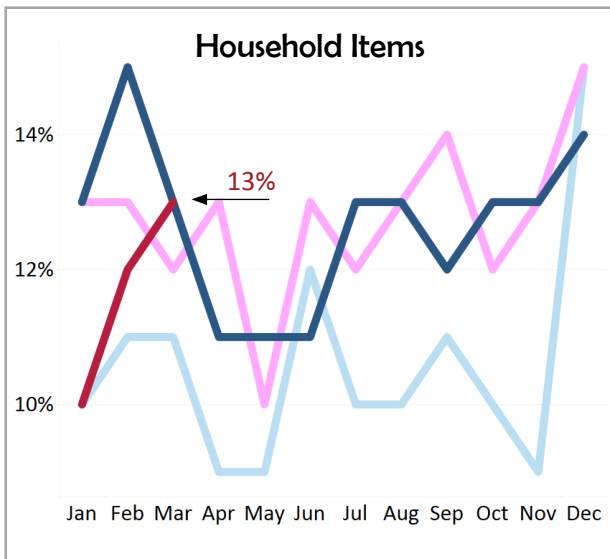
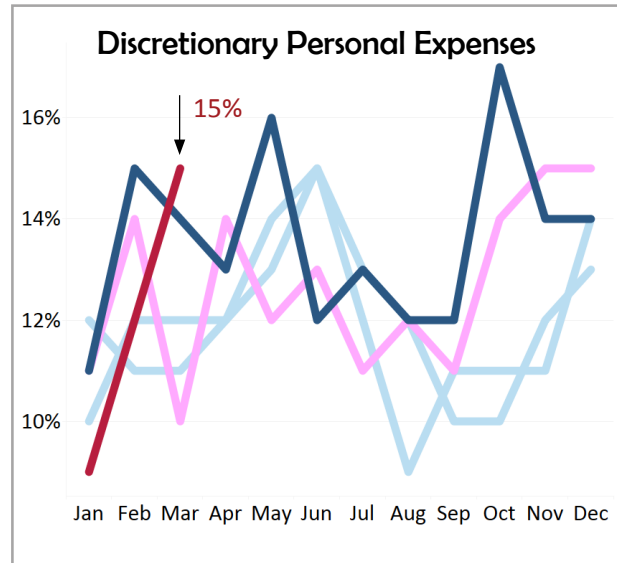
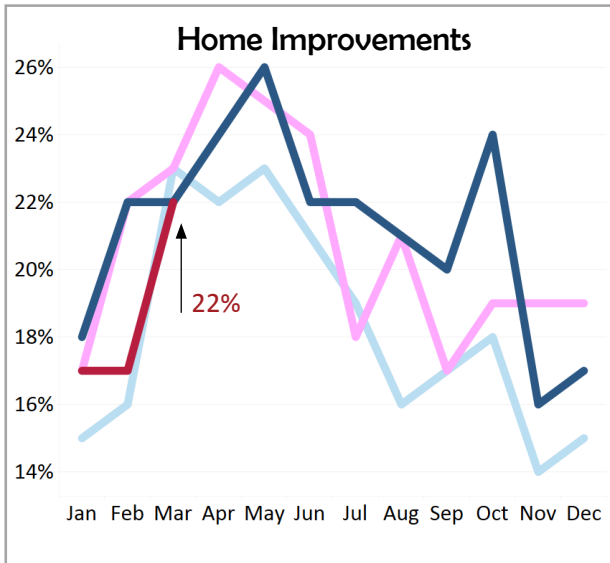
[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS](#)

# FOCUS ON RETAIL

## SPENDING UP IN 3 OF 4 CATEGORIES

Chain Store Guide's Retail Spending Index started 2019 down significantly. But like everything else this month, the news is largely positive. The home improvement season has begun to kick into gear, and consumers who plan to spend more next month than last have reached 2018 levels. Staying with the home theme, Americans' spending on household items also look to match 2018 levels and better 2016 and 2017. Discretionary personal expenses are on the rise to a point that we've only see surpassed twice since January 2016. The only category we found wanting is clothes, footwear and accessories, but perhaps a warm spell is all that's needed to get consumers thinking about refreshing those spring and summer wardrobes.

### Consumers Who Plan to Spend More Next Month vs Last



Year  
2019  
2018  
2017  
2016

Get More Leads & Drive More Sales With  
**CSG's Discount, Dollar & Specialty Stores Database**  
[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS](#)

## MORE ABOUT CHAIN STORE GUIDE

For more than 80 years, Chain Store Guide (CSG) has been the leading provider of comprehensive and definitive retail and foodservice intelligence to businesses around the world.

Chain Store Guide data is the definitive source that is used by manufacturers, suppliers, service providers, brokers, real estate professionals, retailers, analysts, consultants and other professionals seeking to gain insight into retail and foodservice markets in the U.S. and Canada.

Our data includes all major retailers, restaurants, distributors and wholesalers in the United States and Canada with contact information on over 66,900 chains.

### CHAIN STORE GUIDE DATA IS USED FOR

- Competitive Analysis
- Proximity Analysis
- Market Share Reporting
- Industry Profiling
- Market + Trend Analysis
- Forecasting
- Site Planning
- Industry Profiling
- Data Appending/Cleansing
- Lead Generation

## MORE ABOUT THE CONSUMER SPENDING REPORT

The CSG US Spending Monitor, Retail Spending Index, and Restaurant Spending Index are monthly indexes of consumer spending intentions and capacity **based on interviews with a random sample of 1,500 U.S. adults**. In addition to spending, the survey asks consumers their opinions on the U.S. economy and their personal finances, retail and other discretionary spending.

The Monitor began in January 2014 with a base index of 100. CSG captures a unique view of consumer, retail, and foodservice spending intentions. The CSR includes the CSG US Spending Monitor, which tracks economic confidence and spending intentions of US consumers, the CSG Restaurant Spending Index, which measures consumer spending intentions for restaurant purchases, and the CSG Retail Spending Index that measures consumer retail and discretionary spending confidence.



### ABOUT THE EDITOR

**Mike Baker** joined Chain Store Guide in 2016, bringing with him the extensive publishing, brand management and new-product development experience that he gained over the course of a decade with John Wiley & Sons publishers in North America and the U.K. He fills the role of writer, editor and analyst for a host of retail and foodservice industries with CSG.