



## Increase in fuel and food sales boosts U.S. convenience store industry

**U.S. convenience stores also experienced a 16th straight year of record in-store sales in 2018, according to newly released NACS State of the Industry data.**

U.S. convenience stores sales overall surged 8.9% to \$654.3 billion, led by a 13.2% increase in fuel sales, which account for 69.6% of total sales. In-store sales increased 2.2% to a record \$242.2 billion. Overall, convenience stores sales are 3.1% of the U.S. gross domestic product of \$20.5 trillion.

Higher gas prices, up 13.7% from \$2.37 per gallon in 2017 to \$2.69 per gallon in 2018, contributed to the increase in overall industry sales. Fuel margins, which have increased over the last five years, were also higher in 2018, up 7.5% to 23.35 cents per gallon.

"Fuel sales were strong in 2018 but consumers were making fewer stops to refuel, which suggests that greater fuel efficiency in vehicles is translating to less trips per week to the convenience store," said Andy Jones, NACS vice chairman of research.

Foodservice sales accounted for 22.6% of in-store sales, a category that continues to be a key focus area for the convenience store channel.

The growth in foodservice also has led to an increase in store size. Overall, the average convenience store is 3,230 square feet. But as newer stores feature touchscreen food-ordering kiosks, add space for in-store seating and waiting areas and incorporate an open-kitchen design, the size of new stores has increased to 4,991 in rural locations, and 4,603 square feet in urban locations.

Cigarettes continue to be the number one in-store category accounting for 31% of the sales inside the store.

Convenience retail industry data was announced at the NACS State of the Industry Summit, taking place April 2-4 at the O'Hare Hyatt Regency in Chicago.