

**U.S. Mint Focus Group Research  
Discussion Guide  
Customers/Non-Customers**

**I. INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)**

**According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1525-0012-XX.**

**Ground Rules:** Audio-taping, confidentiality, candor, cell phones, pagers, etc.

- **Background & Objectives:** The purpose of today's discussion is three-fold; namely to: 1) learn about your current coin collecting interests, behaviors and purchases (if any); 2) gather your feedback regarding current U.S. Mint products; and 3) ascertain your reactions to some new product ideas.
- **Introductions:** First name, types of coins that are especially liked, length of time collecting and/or buying U.S. coins

**II. CURRENT COIN COLLECTING/BUYING PRACTICES (20 minutes)**

- **What particular types of coins have special interest or appeal to you and what makes these coins so attractive to you? Probe...**
  - Beauty or artistry?
  - The history associated with them?
  - Other factors, if any, that play a role in your attitudes and behaviors?
- **What coin purchases, if any, have you made? For example, have you bought any U.S. coins from dealers, Internet auctions, (etc.)?**
  - **If some:** Why have you not purchased any coins from the U.S. Mint?
    - To what extent is lack of awareness a factor?
    - What about limited knowledge/dissatisfaction with current products?
    - How about the perceived value/prices of the products?
    - What do these other sources provide that the U.S. Mint does not?

- **If none:** Why have you never purchased any coins from any sources?
  - To what extent is lack of awareness a factor?
  - What about limited knowledge/dissatisfaction with current products?
  - How about the perceived value/prices of the products?
- **Probe** if any have purchased any special coins (similar to those included in the product concepts to be discussed later)

### III. ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PRODUCTS (20 minutes)

*[Distribute US Mint catalog. Subsequently distribute various U.S. Mint product samples.]*

- **Overall, what are your impressions of the coin products that the U.S. Mint produces? Probe...**
  - Which ones are best? Worst?
  - How likely would you be to consider purchasing any/each of these...
    - For yourself?
    - As a gift (for whom)?

*[Ask participants to sort products in terms of likelihood to purchase.]*

### IV. ASSESSMENT OF CANDIDATE PRODUCTS (20 minutes)

*[Introduce each candidate U.S. Mint product idea (including samples) and ask...]*

- **Overall, what are your impressions of this product? Probe...**
  - Aspects that are attractive/unattractive
  - Likelihood to purchase...
    - For yourself?
    - As a gift (for whom)?

## V. INFORMATION SOURCES AND CHANNELS (15 minutes)

*[First ask customers/non-customers to write down answers to main questions in this section regarding used/preferred information sources individually.]*

- ***In general, where do you look for (or if you were seeking) information regarding collectible products (especially coins)? Where else? Probe for...***
  - Newspapers
  - Newsletters
  - Coin magazines/periodicals
  - Coin clubs (online and off)
  - Chat rooms
  - Catalogs
  - Books
  - E-mails (from U.S. Mint/other)
  - U.S. Mint (catalog, website, etc.)
  - Other (private) mints (Franklin Mint, DC Mint, Bradford Exchange, etc.)
  - Etc.

*[Complete communications ratings sheets.]*

- ***What sources for advertising U.S. Mint products would be most likely to reach you? Why?***
- ***What types of messages or information would you be most interested in learning about potential coin products?***
- ***What types of promotional ideas or efforts might encourage you to buy coins?***

*[Display potential creative ideas and obtain reactions.]*

## VI. BARRIERS TO PURCHASING (15 minutes)

- ***What are some of the key barriers to your current purchasing coin products from the U.S. Mint? [Capture ideas on flipchart]***
- ***What actions could the U.S. Mint take to address some of these barriers?***

*[Explore reactions to candidate U.S. Mint ideas for addressing barriers.]*

## VII. GIFT-GIVING NEEDS/INTERESTS (15-30 minutes)

- ***What types of coin items would be most interesting to you as potential gifts?***
- ***What could the U.S. Mint do to make giving coins as a gift more compelling to you? Probe...***
  - Packaging
  - Presentation materials
  - Communications needs
  - New items/ideas

*[Explore reactions to candidate U.S. Mint gifting ideas.]*

## **XII. MISCELLANY & WRAP-UP (5 minutes)**

*[Complete rating sheets defined by U.S. Mint related to specific topics discussed.]*

- ***Probe additional issues identified by U.S. Mint; thank and conclude***