

**UNITED STATES MINT**  
**QUALITATIVE CONSUMER RESEARCH**  
UNITED STATES MINT YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS  
**OMB Clearance Request**  
OMB CONTROL NUMBER 1525-0012  
11/15/2017

**Introduction /Purpose of the Research**

This request is for OMB clearance for the United States Mint's to conduct a series of Youth focus groups, which are designed to develop an in-depth understanding from existing and potential customers and their children of between 7-12 years of age regarding potential youth products and overall gift buying habits for the legal guardians.

The purpose of the research is to collect information from United States Mint customers and non-customers (legal guardians) and youth (ages 7 – 12 yrs old) to evaluate potential youth oriented United States Mint products and related marketing activities. The information gathered from these focus-group sessions will provide guidance and direction for these specific products and services for FY18 and onward in order to ensure we carry out our mandate effectively and efficiently.

Part of the United States Mint's mission is to produce and sell collectible coin products to the American public. Executive Order No. 12862 (September 1993), titled "Setting Customer Service Standards," establishes a mandate for the government to ensure the kind and quality of services offered are aligned with those the public wants (Section 1b). To effectively accomplish these goals, the United States Mint utilizes a combination of accepted research methods that shed light on the awareness, satisfaction and preferences among the public as they relate to collectible coin products and services. Conducting focus groups in order to receive customer feedback is one element of this research project.

The consequence of not performing this collection is the United States Mint's diminished ability to maintain service levels that satisfy customers.

**Qualitative Research Topic Outline**

The topics planned for discussion are:

1. Assessment and evaluation of new youth product concepts (provided by United States Mint).
2. Adult consumer practices when searching and selecting gifts for children.
3. Popular websites and mobile applications commonly visited.

## **Sample Design and Methodology**

A total of 12 focus groups will be conducted in 4 cities (3 focus groups per location). Approximately 7 legal guardian/youth pairs (14 individuals total) will be involved in each focus group session and include a combination of customers and non-customers. Screeners are utilized to help recruit and select the appropriate respondents for focus groups. Lists of potential participants in customer groups are obtained from our customer database. Customer groups are typically segmented based on annual spending on United States Mint products (e.g., high and low spend) and/or tenure levels depending on the research objectives. Customers fitting the segmentation criteria are selected for recruitment at random until a maximum number of participants are reached. The non-customer segment are recruited from local lists and are selected for recruitment at random until a maximum number of participants are reached.

Focus group discussions are facilitated by a professional moderator and different techniques are used to elicit feedback. A discussion guide will be utilized and serves as an outline, prepared in advance for the respondents, that covers the topics and issues to be explored. The guide is designed with the overall research questions in mind and is constructed to ensure that topics covered in the focus groups relate to these research objectives. The groups typically involve both structured and free flowing discussion exploring specific topics of interest related to our products and marketing activities. Materials are frequently provided to participants to facilitate feedback on the topic at hand.

These qualitative insights are used to understand the range of opinions and concerns that exist on a research topic, not to precisely quantify insights provided by respondents. Reports clearly indicate that the collected information is not generalizable and that it should be used solely to provide directional insights. Focus groups and other qualitative studies are an important complement to our quantitative research in that they provide deep insights into underlying consumer attitudes and preferences and are frequently used both to help explain observable trends and to provide direction for applied research topics. They are an important tool used by the Numismatic and Bullion Directorate to help develop and plan changes to products, policies and marketing activities.

## **Methods to Maximize Response Rates**

We expect one out of every seven customers contacted will agree to participate in the study. Cities will be selected based on concentration of customers. By recruiting in cities with a higher number of United States Mint customers, the likelihood of participation increases. Appropriate screeners will be set up to guarantee selection of the right customers for the study. A monetary incentive of \$100 will be offered to the legal guardians. This is a common industry practice.

### **Estimate of the Burden Hours**

The collection of information will include completion of 12 in-person focus groups. Each focus group will have 7 legal guardians and 7 children between the ages of 7 and 12 years old in age. A total of 168 respondents (legal guardians and youth) will participate in the focus groups. Each focus groups will last a total of 1 hour and will consist of 2 half-hour sessions: one with the children, and one with the legal guardians. Therefore, the total estimated burden hours for this collection are:

|                              | Focus Groups – Annual |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| All respondents              | 168                   |
| Average minutes per group    | 60 mins               |
| Total estimated burden hours | 168 hrs               |

*If you have questions related to the review of this collection request, you may contact any of the following individuals at the United States Mint's Numismatic and Bullion Directorate:*

- Manoj Pillai – [manoj.pillai@usmint.treas.gov](mailto:manoj.pillai@usmint.treas.gov); 202-354-7255