
United States Mint Focus Groups Research Discussion Guide

I. INTRODUCTION

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 1506-0062.

- Ground Rules: Audio-taping, anonymity, candor, cell phones, pagers, etc.
- Background & Objectives: The purpose of today's discussion is to talk about some core product enhancements and possible new products the U.S. Mint is considering.
- Introductions: First name
- **Customers:** Types of coins that are especially liked, length of time collecting and/or buying U.S. coins. Probe if for self or as a gift
- **Non-Customers:** Items collected and length of time collecting. Ever purchased U.S. coins?

Demonstrate core products for Non-Customers

II. CURRENT COIN COLLECTING/BUYING PRACTICES

(Non-Customers) 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?
- **(Non-Customers) 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?

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- 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?
- ***(Non-Customers) Have you ever considered purchasing coins to give as gifts? Probe...***
 - **If so:** For whom? What occasions?
 - **If not:** Why not?
 - What circumstances would prompt you to make such a purchase?
 - What types of items, if any, would propel you to make a purchase?
 - ***(Customers) What types of coins and coin-related products have you bought from the U.S. Mint? Probe if for self or as a gift***
 - ***(Customers) Thinking specifically about the coins that you buy from the U.S. Mint, what specific products and how much of each do you typically purchase directly from the U.S. Mint in a year? Probe...***
 - Annual coin sets (e.g., quarters, uncirculated, proofs, silver proofs, etc.)
 - America the Beautiful products
 - Commemorative coins
 - Bags/rolls
 - American Eagle coins
 - Gold Buffalo
 - Presidential \$1 coins
 - Medals
 - Other items (e.g., specialty products)
 - ***(Customers) What types of coins do you expect to purchase from the U.S. Mint in the next year? Probe...***
 - Annual coin sets (e.g., quarters, uncirculated, proofs, silver proofs, etc.)
 - America the Beautiful products
 - Commemorative coins
 - Bags/rolls
 - American Eagle coins
 - Gold Buffalo
 - Presidential \$1 coins
 - Medals
 - Other items (e.g., specialty products)

III. ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PRODUCTS/PACKAGING

- ***(Customers/Non-customers) Overall, what are your impressions of the coin products that the U.S. Mint produces? Probe...***

- Things you like? Dislike?
- How do you feel about them for self? For gifts?
- ***(Customers/Non-customers) How do you feel about the packaging of the products in general?*** (Note: some customers will say no packaging at all so need to acknowledge and move on.)
 - How do you feel about the packaging for items you do/might purchase for self? For gifts?
- ***(Customers/Non-customers) Ask each participant which item they rated highest, and which lowest, and why?***
 - Probe...what specifically do you like/dislike?
- ***(Customers/Non-customers) As a group, ask why certain items were collectively rated low.***
 - Probe...what specifically do you dislike?
- ***(Customers/Non-customers) How does the current packaging (especially ones that are disliked) affect their likelihood to purchase...***
 - For self?
 - For gift?
 - Why?

IV. Commemorative Coins

Explain to participants about the commemorative coin.

- How familiar are you with X?
- What is important to you about X?
- Would you be interested in a gold coin? A Silver coin?
 - o **Probe:** two-coin bundled set (not a special set)

Hand out Commemorative Coins rating sheet

Hand out Content Focus and allow time for highlighting/cross-out exercise

Explain to participants: For some commemorative coins, the U.S. Mint produces a special set that can include historical information, a unique display, and additional content. The envisioned set would include a silver proof coin and sell for approximately \$60-\$70.

Allow participants to view previous commemorative special sets

- If the U.S. Mint were to produce such a set, what would you like it to focus on?
- What images or other components would you like to see?
 - **Probe:** stamps, quotes, prints, images, etc.
- Among these previous commemorative special sets, which packaging is most appealing to you?
 - **Probe:** size, shape, presentation/display, coin holder, graphic/image placement
- Do you prefer an informational booklet or information printed on the packaging? Both?
 - **Probe:** if desired, should booklet and/or packaging include photos only, a mix of photos and information, or information only?

Hand out Commemorative set rating sheet

V. ADDITIONAL TOPICS AS REQUIRED BY U.S. MINT

VI. WRAP UP

- Thank participants. Ask for any other comments.