

**Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback” (OMB Control Number: 1525-0012)**

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**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:** Bullion Demand Research Study

**PURPOSE:**

This new project request is for the United States Mint’s to conduct a research study to understand the profile of silver, gold, and platinum bullion coin buyers, understanding purchasing processes and preferences, and exploring motivations for and possible barriers to purchase.

This study is similar to recent quantitative product assessments the U.S. Mint has undertaken. The results from this survey research project will help the United States Mint understand and address overall questions related to the bullion market.

Part of the United States Mint’s mission is to produce and make collectible coin products available directly to the American public. Executive Order No. 12862 (September 1993), titled “Setting Customer Service Standards,” establishes a mandate for the government to improve and adhere to best practices when providing customer service directly to the American people, such as by conducting research to determine satisfaction with existing services and 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 and bullion coin products and services. The United States Mint Bullion Demand Research Survey is one of these instruments.

Conducting market research in advance of introducing new products and services, or before making changes to existing products and services, is vital to ensuring those decisions are as likely as possible to enhance customer satisfaction and maximize organizational efficiency. The United States Mint knows from experience that making new product and service decisions in the absence of reliable data-based information is likely to lead to undesirable outcomes in terms of customer satisfaction and organizational performance. The United States Mint is placing renewed emphasis on advance testing of new product concepts and changes to existing products to inform our decision making and improve customer and operational outcomes.

The consequences of not performing this ad hoc survey are the United States Mint’s diminished ability to produce and offer bullion coin products that the public is interested and satisfies customers.

**DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:**

Three types of respondents:

U.S. Mint customers (those who have purchased bullion product in the past, those who have purchased Proof or Uncirculated silver/gold/platinum coins, as well as general customers).

A segment of General Consumers (non U.S. Mint customers) who have purchased Silver/Gold/Platinum Coins and/or other precious metal (non-jewelry) products (e.g., gold bars, etc.).

A segment of General Consumers (non U.S. Mint customers) who are non-purchasers of silver/gold/platinum/palladium coins or other precious metal (non-jewelry) products

**TYPE OF COLLECTION:** (Check one)

- Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form
- Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software)
- Focus Group
- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Small Discussion Group
- Other: \_\_BULLION DEMAND SURVEY\_\_

**CERTIFICATION:**

I certify the following to be true:

1. The collection is voluntary.
2. The collection is low-burden for respondents and low-cost for the Federal Government.
3. The collection is non-controversial and does not raise issues of concern to other federal agencies.
4. The results are not intended to be disseminated to the public.
5. Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential policy decisions.
6. The collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program or may have experience with the program in the future.

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To assist review, please provide answers to the following question:

**Personally Identifiable Information:**

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected?  Yes  No
2. If Yes, will any information that is collected be included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974?  Yes  No
3. If Yes, has an up-to-date System of Records Notice (SORN) been published?  Yes  No

**Gifts or Payments:**

Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? [ ] Yes [ X ] No

**BURDEN HOURS**

<b>Category of Respondent</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Participation Time</b>	<b>Burden</b>
United States Mint Customers	2,500	15 minutes	625 hrs
non U.S. Mint customers who have purchased Silver/Gold/Platinum Coins and/or other precious metal (non-jewelry) products	500	15 minutes	125 hrs
non U.S. Mint customers who have <u>not</u> purchased Silver/Gold/Platinum Coins and/or other precious metal (non-jewelry) products	1000	15 minutes	250 hrs
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4000</b>	<b>15 minutes</b>	<b>1,000 hrs</b>

**FEDERAL COST:** The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is \_\_\_\$235,681\_\_\_

**If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:**

**The selection of your targeted respondents**

1. Do you have a customer list or something similar that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe?  
 Yes       No

If the answer is yes, please provide a description of both below (or attach the sampling plan)? If the answer is no, please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them?

Survey participants will include both U.S. Mint Customers and Non-Customers. Below is the description of the criteria for selection:

- U.S. Mint Customers will those who have purchased bullion product in the past, those who have purchased Proof or Uncirculated silver/gold/platinum coins Customers would be invited via an e-mail invitation with names provided by the United States Mint customer database.
- We will screen two sets of Non-Customers to ensure the following criteria listed below. Both Non-Customer groups will be recruited from consumer Internet panels.
  - o Those that have purchased Silver/Gold/Platinum Coins and/or other precious metal (non-jewelry) products (e.g., gold bars, etc.).
  - o Those who are non-purchasers of silver/gold/platinum/palladium coins or other precious metal (non-jewelry) products, but have expressed an interest in purchasing silver/gold/platinum/palladium coins

The survey sample will be allocated to ensure that the Customers who evaluate each monadic cell are “matched” on key dimensions. For example, we will control the proportion of Customers allocated to each monadic cell so that we achieve a balance of those who have purchased United States Mint bullion products as well as those that are consider high / low spenders of United States Mint products. Similarly, for Non-Customers, the sample will be balanced on age, gender, and income.

**Administration of the Instrument**

1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)  
[ X ] Web-based or other forms of Social Media  
[ ] Telephone  
[ ] In-person  
[ ] Mail  
[ ] Other, Explain
2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? [ ] Yes [ X ] No

**Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.**

**Instructions for completing Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback”**

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**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:** Provide the name of the collection that is the subject of the request. (e.g. Comment card for soliciting feedback on xxxx)

**PURPOSE:** Provide a brief description of the purpose of this collection and how it will be used. If this is part of a larger study or effort, please include this in your explanation.

**DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:** Provide a brief description of the targeted group or groups for this collection of information. These groups must have experience with the program.

**TYPE OF COLLECTION:** Check one box. If you are requesting approval of other instruments under the generic, you must complete a form for each instrument.

**CERTIFICATION:** Please read the certification carefully. If you incorrectly certify, the collection will be returned as improperly submitted or it will be disapproved.

**Personally Identifiable Information:** Provide answers to the questions. Note: Agencies should only collect PII to the extent necessary, and they should only retain PII for the period of time that is necessary to achieve a specific objective.

**Gifts or Payments:** If you answer yes to the question, please describe the incentive and provide a justification for the amount.

**BURDEN HOURS:**

**Category of Respondents:** Identify who you expect the respondents to be in terms of the following categories: (1) Individuals or Households;(2) Private Sector; (3) State, local, or tribal governments; or (4) Federal Government. Only one type of respondent can be selected per row.  
**No. of Respondents:** Provide an estimate of the Number of respondents.

**Participation Time:** Provide an estimate of the amount of time required for a respondent to participate (e.g. fill out a survey or participate in a focus group)

**Burden:** Provide the Annual burden hours: Multiply the Number of responses and the participation time and divide by 60.

**FEDERAL COST:** Provide an estimate of the annual cost to the Federal government.

**If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:**

**The selection of your targeted respondents.** Please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them. If the answer is yes, to the first question, you may provide the sampling plan in an attachment.

**Administration of the Instrument:** Identify how the information will be collected. More than one box may be checked. Indicate whether there will be interviewers (e.g. for surveys) or facilitators (e.g., for focus groups) used.

**Submit all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.**