Target Audience

K-12 students/teachers with the expectation that they will become long term members after some period of time.

Our target range is 8-24 (3rd grade up to graduate school). Should consider including targeting the military E2-E4 range on deployment . We do not expect them to be extremely active in the 25-40 year old range. *Note, is this loss of the 25-40 year old range an issue for the ACA in general?*

How

Establish the ACA as a fun activity that they engage with on a multiple times per week basis. We want them to remember it fondly when looking for something to do later on in life.

Problem

The current ACA website and content is inaccessible to the target audience. The presentation format (web, paper) is not conducive to access on their preferred device - a cell phone.

Proposal

1. **Hook** – Making the cryprogram.org website a destination that the target audience uses for reference.

   a. Convert all PDFs to HTML to improve the Google ranking. Consider hiring an SEO expert (<$5,000 type person here). Should have metrics for specific keywords appearing on the first page of Google search results.

   b. Provide better description hints for solving ciphers so that cryptogram.org is above the fold on Google searches for cipher types.

   c. Consider putting links in and updating Wikipedia to point to ACA public pages. Note that the Wikipedia page may even be a major portion of what is on the ACA page.

   d. Look at doing Youtube videos of solving ciphers. Use "famous" ACA members. Need to have a "branding" that makes the videos have some style that is compelling. 15-20 minutes.. e.g. Mark Rober, Kiwami Japan Knife Making. Well produced matters! Consider taking some articles from existing ACA magazines and turn it into a video. Can help retention of existing members. Consider working with a university to get studio time/facilities. Need to determine budget per video here. Every video has a hidden cipher in it.

2. **Direct engagement** – Offering a reduced or free membership to a target portion of the students.

   a. Free subscription to winners of the state and national championships. Possibly consider expanding to all participants (6,000 teams = 15,000 students).

   b. Reduced cost subscription to coaches.

   c. Consider a PDF version to reduce shipping costs.

   d. Need to consider how to validate that they are the proper recipient.

3. ***Long term engagement*** – Interactive content on the ACA website – this needs to be automatic and not require a person constantly monitoring the submissions.

   a. Ability to solve CONs on the web (note that it needs to work on the Cell phone!) Think Wordle here, only a limited number per day. Should include Aristocrats, Patristocrats and Cryptarithms for free. Others are behind the paywall.

   b. Tracking of submitted solutions (checked automatically – "untouched by human hands")

   c. "Badging" - Think about military ribbons. Based on achievements: e.g. number of sols, quality of sols, speed of sols.

Thoughts to consider

A "free" tier with content that non-members can interact with to entice them to become members. For example non-members can solve one or two ciphers (only aristocrats) a day but members get extra to solve and access to other cipher types. This implies that the ACA website has user authentication .. should consider OAuth to allow Google/Apple/Facebook/Microsoft/Yahoo or other authenticator so we aren't having to do user management.

Discussion Points

Need to consider how this impacts other members of the ACA.

Need to have money in the budget for long term maintenance.

Costs

SEO	$5.000
Website Update	$15,000
Youtube Videos	TBD
"Free" Subscriptions	TBD
Reduced Subscriptions	TBD
Challenge Coin Prize	TBD
Interactive Website	TBD

Other Ideas beyond this proposal

● Consider some small prize like an ACA Challenge coin for internal competitions or convention winners.