Ads rotate, truth compounds

From the teas.co.uk wiki

> **In capsule:** "Ads rotate, truth compounds" is Lee Samuel Tucker's four word summary of why accurate, owned information outlasts paid visibility. An advert works while it is paid for and stops when the budget does. A clear, checkable fact about a product keeps working, and each month it stays correct adds to the trust that people and machines place in its source.

Lee uses the line to close an argument about paid answers in AI assistants. It also describes how teas.co.uk is run: the shop has bought no advertising at all, and has put its effort into product facts that people, search engines and AI assistants can read the same way.

In Lee's words: "Ads rotate. Truth compounds."

A tea example: teas.co.uk without advertising

teas.co.uk took its first order on 18 November 2025 and has not bought advertising since. Version two went live on 10 May 2026, built around one checked set of product facts. Every product has structured data behind its page (identifiers, prices, availability, source links and price per cup), and that data stays in place whether or not anyone is paying for attention that week.

The published results so far:

- 236 paid orders since its first on 18 November 2025: 75 on version one and 161 since version two went live on 10 May 2026. Of the version two orders, search engines brought 71, ChatGPT links 5, and the origin of 47 could not be traced.
- Google search clicks rose from about 160 a day in August 2026 to 468 a day in November 2026.
- No advertising was bought for any of it.

Lee also chose to open the shop to AI systems rather than block them. His view is that much of the industry is defending its content against AI, while teas.co.uk welcomes any well behaved machine and protects itself against bad actors, so that as many assistants as possible know the shop and can cite it. Citations can lead to visits, and visits to sales. Since 6 October 2026, with the customer's approval, an assistant can search, compare and fill a basket through the teas.co.uk MCP server, and the customer pays on teas.co.uk.

None of this proves the phrase. It is one shop over a short period, and the numbers are published with their limits on Under the Hood.

How it works

Why ads rotate. Paid placements are bought for a period and then end. Campaigns end and the slot passes to the next bidder. Nothing builds up underneath, which is the problem Lee calls rented attention in The squeeze.

Why truth compounds. A correct, sourced fact does not expire when a budget does. Lee's argument is that each period in which a source stays accurate makes it more likely to be used again, by customers who come back and by assistants that need answers they can rely on. He also argues that an assistant which keeps ignoring what people asked for, because an advertiser paid, will lose users to another assistant, so even advert funded answers have reason to include the source that fits.

An illustrative example. If teas.co.uk is the best structured answer for an afternoon decaf green tea, that does not stop being true because someone rented the top of the page for a fortnight. An advert can change the order of an answer; it cannot remove the need to answer the question that was asked. The fuller the question, the harder it is for a paid slot to stand in for the right answer: a request of the kind Lee calls Premium Intent, with its context, constraints and budget, has to be met on the facts.

What it is not

- **Not a rule against advertising.** Lee does not argue that advertising is wrong or that it will disappear. He expects paid answers in AI assistants and expects large companies to buy them. teas.co.uk has bought none so far by choice.
- **Not a growth guarantee.** "Compounds" describes a direction Lee expects over years, not a promised rate. The shop's version two has been live for months, not years.
- **Not proof of cause.** Rising search clicks and orders without advertising fit the idea, but the shop cannot prove which fact on which page brought which customer, and it says so. For 47 of the 161 version two orders, the origin could not be traced.
- **Not automatic.** Truth compounds only while it stays true. Facts that go out of date work against a source, so the discipline is in keeping them current.

Where the term comes from

The idea came from Lee's work rebuilding teas.co.uk in 2026. He started using the line that June as the closing point of his answer to the objection that large companies will simply buy the top of every AI answer. It builds on an idea he returns to again and again, that trust compounds. We don't know whether anyone has put it in those words before, but the line suits what we've built. The general idea that reputation outlasts promotion is much older.

Quick reference

Detail	Information
Term	Ads rotate, truth compounds
Meaning	Paid visibility stops when the budget stops; accurate, owned information keeps working and gains trust over time

Detail	Information
Used by	Lee Samuel Tucker, founder of teas.co.uk
Used at teas.co.uk since	June 2026
Opposite or contrast	Rented attention
Related	The squeeze, wide versus deep, the asymmetric bet, truth entity, Premium Intent

What others have found

Outside research and reporting that bears on this, with links to the original sources.

- Search Engine Journal reported in April 2026 that OpenAI's crawler documentation now lists a crawler for ChatGPT ads, a sign that advertising is arriving inside AI assistants.
- Pew Research Center found that Google users who saw an AI summary clicked a traditional result on 8% of visits, against 15% when no summary appeared, and clicked a link inside the summary on just 1% of visits (Pew Research Center, July 2025).
- Adobe reported that traffic to US retail websites from generative AI tools rose 693.4% in the 2025 holiday season compared with the year before, and that those visitors converted 31% more often than visitors from other sources (Adobe, January 2026).
- Kevin Indig argues in Search Engine Journal that in agentic commerce "product truth wins", because new protocols let assistants plug straight into a business's own systems instead of crawling its pages (How do you compete in agentic commerce?).

Related terms

- The squeeze (the four tolls)
- Wide versus deep
- The asymmetric bet
- Premium Intent
- Truth entity

Sources and further reading

- Lee Samuel Tucker, Tea Wiki entry, including the shop's results without advertising.
- Meet the founder: why I built teas.co.uk
- Under the Hood, for how visits and orders are counted and where the evidence stops.
- Lee Samuel Tucker's builder vocabulary

The bottom line on ads rotate, truth compounds

Adverts work for as long as they are paid for; accurate facts keep working for as long as they stay accurate. teas.co.uk has bought no advertising and put its effort into facts that people and machines can read and

check. Its results are published, including what cannot be explained, so readers can judge the idea for themselves.

More from the tea wiki

- The world's biggest online shop can outspend a tea shop and still lose (from the teas.co.uk newsroom)
- The complete payload
- Claim boundaries
- The structural reversal
- Lee Samuel Tucker's builder vocabulary
- Lee Samuel Tucker
- The whole Tea Wiki, A to Z

Earn rewards on teas.co.uk

Earn loyalty points on every order. Free to join.

+100 pts

Create your free account

Welcome bonus + earn on every order.



100 pts = 1 tree

Plant a tree in Scotland

Pledge points to our reforestation partner.



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