What is an entity? A plain-English guide using a tea shop

From the teas.co.uk wiki

An **entity** is a particular thing that we can identify and describe. A person, a business, a product and a recipe can each be an entity. The useful part is keeping track of which thing a fact belongs to.

Why a tea shop cares: an assistant has to know that a brand, a tea and a box size are different things before it can recommend the right one.

Think of a box of tea. Its brand is one fact. Its pack size is another. The tea itself, the company that makes it and the shop selling it are related, but they are different things. A reliable answer needs to keep those differences straight.

A page is about a thing

A product page describes a product. The page is its address on the web; the product is the thing it describes. The same product may also appear in a comparison, a recipe suggestion or an assistant's answer.

An 80-bag box and a 240-bag box need to be distinguished when their prices and quantities differ. Their similar names are not enough. Product identifiers help the shop and other systems recognise the exact item.

Schema.org, a shared vocabulary for describing web content, includes types such as Product and the more general Thing. Those labels help software understand what a record describes. They do not certify the record's accuracy.

What does it mean for teas.co.uk?

teas.co.uk is a business with a website, a catalogue and knowledge about what it sells. The aim is to connect those parts clearly: a product belongs to a brand, a wiki article explains a relevant subject, and a recipe can point to the products used in it.

That collection of identified things and relationships is sometimes called a **knowledge graph**. You do not need to see a diagram to use it. Following a link from a decaf product to the decaf guide is one everyday expression of the relationship.

How an entity answers a question

Suppose someone asks for decaf green tea. Software can look for product records whose type is green tea and whose caffeine status is decaffeinated. The filters and constraints make those requirements explicit.

The answer can then include the matching products, their current prices, pack sizes and links. It should say when a required fact is unknown or when nothing matches. A fruity name alone is not evidence that a drink is caffeine-free.

Does the shop “know itself”?

We use that phrase to mean that the business has accessible records about its own range and content. It does not mean that the site has feelings, consciousness or perfect understanding. People still decide what belongs in the record, check sources and correct mistakes.

Lee's term truth entity adds a discipline to the general idea: identifiable things, dependable facts, visible sources and honest limits. The single source of truth explains how those facts can stay consistent across different views.

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