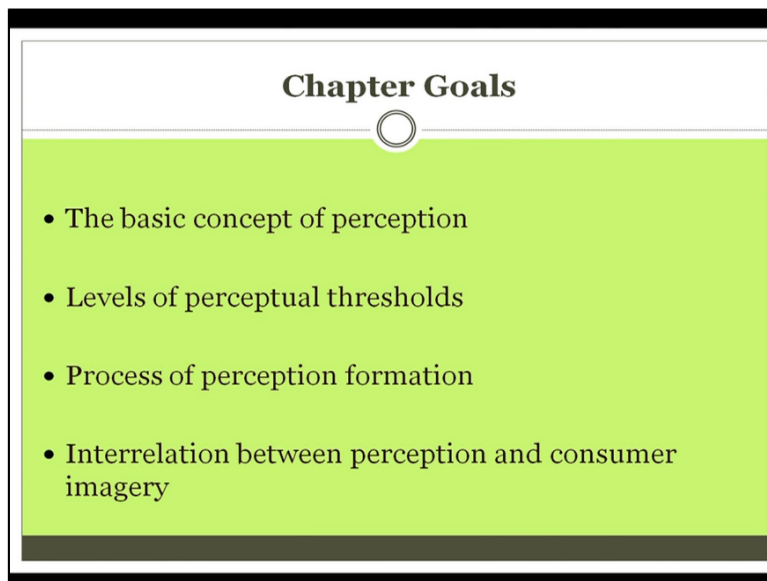


**Consumer Behaviour**  
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**Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur**

**Module No. #02**  
**Lecture No. #09**  
**Concept and Levels of Perception**

Welcome, to the Theory of Perception, now. And, I, Dr Srabanti Mukherjee, from IIT Kharagpur, will be delivering this lecture.

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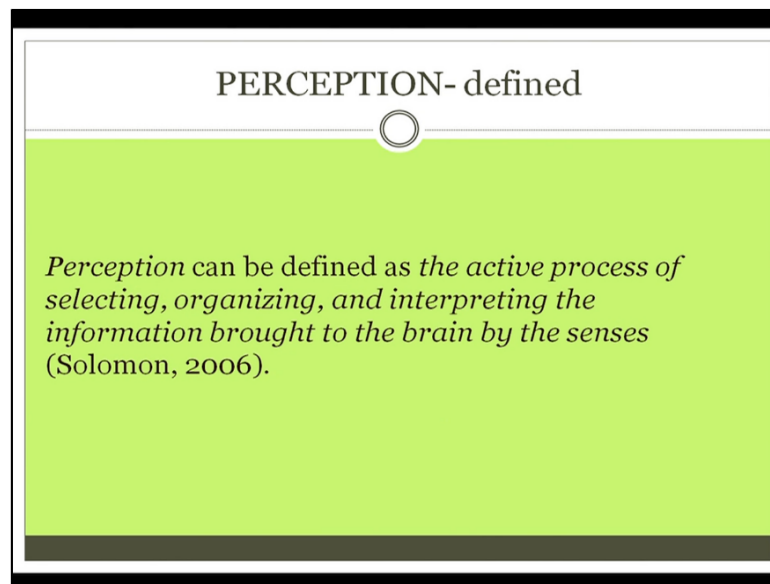
A presentation slide titled "Chapter Goals" with a light green background. The title is centered at the top in a bold, black font. Below the title is a small circular icon. The main content area contains a bulleted list of four goals. The slide is framed by a black border.

**Chapter Goals**

- The basic concept of perception
- Levels of perceptual thresholds
- Process of perception formation
- Interrelation between perception and consumer imagery

The chapter goals, of this particular module is, the Basic Concept of Perception, Levels of Perceptual Thresholds, Process of Perception formation, Interrelation between Perception and Consumer Imagery.

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So, we start, how Perception is defined? What is Perception? So, we say, Solomon in 2006, has defined, Perception can be defined as, the active process of Selecting, Organising, and Interpreting the information, brought to the Brain, by the Senses. If, I look at a Television Ad of Tanishq Mia, what is my understanding about it? Or, if I look an Online Ad of Tanishq Mia, what is my understanding about it? If I see, the Old Ad of Hamara Bajaj Scooter, what is my understanding about it? How do I understand?

First, I have to select, whether that information at all, I really pay any attention, to that information or not. Or, when the Ad is coming, I am switching my Channel, to some other Program. So, am I doing that. So, that has to be, seeing that, whether I am selecting that information or not. Then comes, the organising. How do I organise it? How do, I feel that? Ok. If, that is showing all the Family Members, it is showing a kind of Family image, it a showing a kind of Joint Family System.

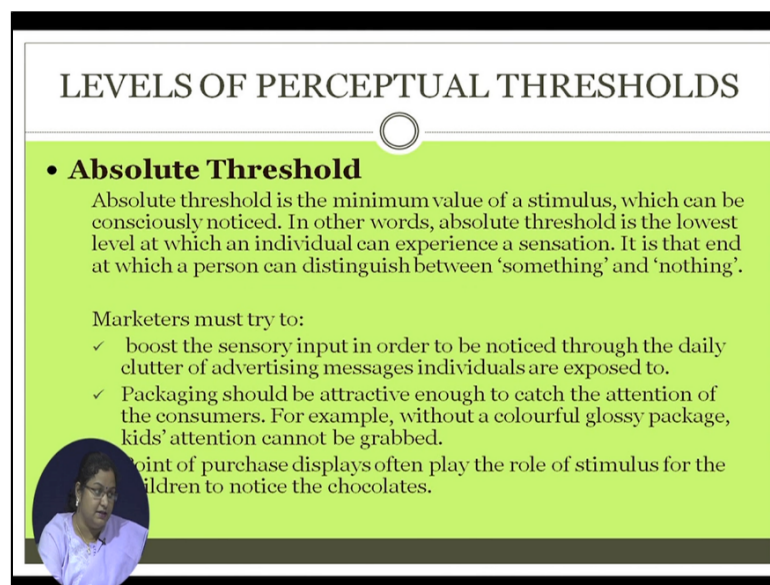
So, if I just look at that ad, I can understand, it is talking about something like, in the period of 80's, or early 80's. Why like this? Because, the Joint Family System, was prevailing that time. Now, Joint Family System is hardly visible. So, the same thing like, Dadaji, Dadima, Uncle of the House, the Lady of the House, everybody is using it. The Child is enjoying it. So, that entire portrayal, which used to portray Hamara Bajaj, the Motorcycle, or the Scooter, as a kind of a Family product.

That is how, I perceived it. Because, that is how, I perceive a Joint Family System. That is how, I perceive an Indian Culture, in 1980's. So, that is how, I perceive the Brand also, in the

same way. So, that is exactly, where to you know, how you organise, based on several characteristics, which you are seeing, several cues, which is given in the act. Then comes, how do you interpret, it obviously, like that only.

If, I see that kind of image, I interpret it as a Family brand, or it is for, all the Members of the Family. So, it is brought by the Sensory organs in our Brain, and we try to interpret it, in that way. And finally, the Perception is formed. So, once again, a Solomon portion. Perception can be defined as, the active process of Selecting, Organising, and Interpreting the information, brought to the Brain, by the Senses.

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**LEVELS OF PERCEPTUAL THRESHOLDS**

- **Absolute Threshold**  
Absolute threshold is the minimum value of a stimulus, which can be consciously noticed. In other words, absolute threshold is the lowest level at which an individual can experience a sensation. It is that end at which a person can distinguish between 'something' and 'nothing'.

Marketers must try to:

- ✓ boost the sensory input in order to be noticed through the daily clutter of advertising messages individuals are exposed to.
- ✓ Packaging should be attractive enough to catch the attention of the consumers. For example, without a colourful glossy package, kids' attention cannot be grabbed.

Point of purchase displays often play the role of stimulus for the children to notice the chocolates.

Now, as I said, Selecting. Now, in Selecting, the first concern, is the, Absolute Threshold. Absolute Threshold, is the minimum value of the Stimulus, which can be consciously noticed. In other words, Absolute Threshold is the lowest level at which, an individual can experience a sensation. It is that end, at which, a person can distinguish between, something and nothing. Some people, like some colours, fluorescent colours. And, when they see a very colourful device, or they see a colourful dress, that may catch their attention.

A light colour dress, may not catch their attention. Because, they as a Customer, they like more of, they are more-fond of, a little bit of colourful dresses. So, the extent of colour, in this case, determines the Absolute Threshold of the product, being noticed by the Customer. Or, even an extent of sound, which may be noticed by the Customer. So therefore, in this case, I say that, Marketers must try to boost the sensory input, in order to be noticed, through the daily clutter of advertising messages, individuals are exposed to.

Because, whenever a Soap is going on, whenever a Serial is going on, that time, in a 5 Minute slot, so many Ads are coming together. And, all this Ads are coming for, at the best, 30 to 40 seconds, not more than that, you know, less. So, and it forms a clutter. So, it is very difficult to catch the attention of the Customer, and to get noticed. And also, the Customers will retain my information, and process in their mind.

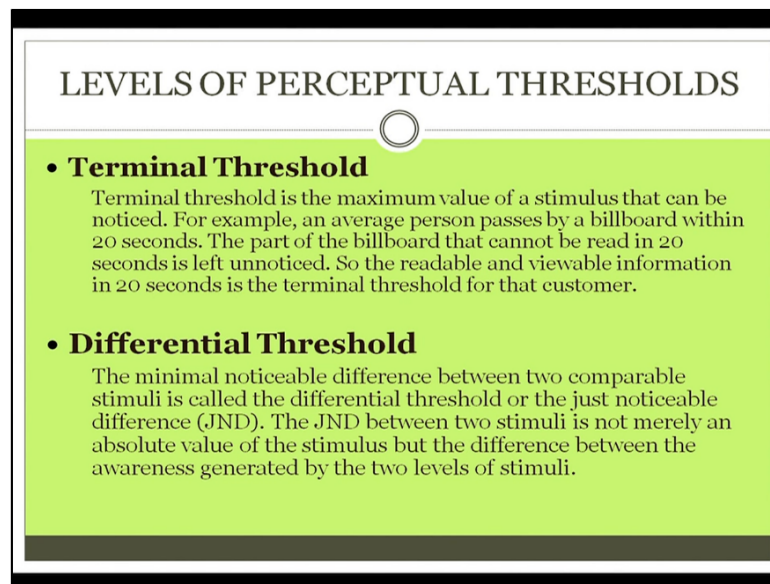
So therefore, even the Products, which are there in the Shelves, must be attractive, to catch the attention of the Customers. Particularly, for the products, which are High Involvement, but Emotional Purchase, or the Product, which are Low Involvement, but Emotional Purchase. For, Low Involvement Emotional Purchase, the Glossy Packages and all this, you know, or some kind of Attractors, which actually surpasses the Customer's attention, from Subliminal Threshold, to the Absolute Threshold, from where they start noticing.

A Child will only notice a Toy, if the Toy is more Colourful, it is having some kind of Light or Sound, something. So, that notice part. Then, Point of Purchase display, often play a role of Stimulus, for the Children, to notice the Chocolates. A very interesting Story, was once told to me, by one Shopkeeper in a Railway Kiosk. He said, that say, we are in the Summer. Mostly, our country, the Summer season is predominant.

So, I used to keep the Chocolate, in front of me. And, Chocolate is the product, if the Children see, then only they will demand. So therefore, I have placed all these Chocolates, in the front Display Cabinet. But, during the Summer, and the kind of Sun, that time it is day scorching heat, the chocolate used to get melted, and the shape is used to get deformed. The Children, did not like, this kind of deformed, and melted chocolate, even.

So, in that, I started thinking, can I put the Chocolate, in the Refrigerator. But, the question is, if I put the Chocolate in the Refrigerator, the Child won't be noticing it. So, they won't demand it. So now, what to do. And, the solution came, as a Transparent Door Refrigerator, where I can keep the Chocolate, and the Child simultaneously can see it. So, this is how, you have to understand, how to surpass, how to pass the Absolute Threshold of the Customer. Otherwise, it may not be noticed.

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Then comes, the Terminal Threshold. The Terminal Threshold, is the maximum value of the Stimulus, that can be noticed. For example, an average person, passes by a Billboard, within 20 seconds. The part of the Billboard, that cannot be read in 20 seconds, is left unnoticed. So, the readable and viewable information in 20 seconds, is the Terminal Threshold of the Customer. So, if most of the Billboards are like, for example, if I put a Billboard in a traffic signal.

And, I know that usually, even if the traffic signal is red, so that average time is around, one minute. So, out of this one minute also, the Customer may notice the Banner, may be for 30 to 40 seconds. So, the maximum span is 30 to 40 seconds. So, I have to plan, in 30 to 40 seconds, how much of information, the Customer can read.

And secondly, if it is a kind of clutter of information, too many information given in the Billboard, in 30 40 seconds probably, he cannot read anything at all. He cannot concentrate on that. So, in the Billboards and Banners, it is very important, to use the whitespace, accurately. And, the use of Colour, the use of Font, the use of Pictures, should be very accurate. So that, the eye movement of the Customer, also is in the same way, the Marketers intend them, to actually do so.

So otherwise, many of the information would be, unnoticed. So, that is why, this 20 seconds, or in this case, the 30 seconds, which I have said, or the amount of information, which the Customer can read in 20 second or 30 second, that is known as the Terminal Threshold. Beyond that the, Customer cannot see, or cannot notice. Okay.

So that, I need to know, even in the Television Commercial, I have to know, that in the Television Commercial, how much of information. I may have, 7 or 8 very good attributes of my products. But, all cannot be my USP. Why? Because, in again 30 second, in the Television Commercial, I may not be able to communicate, so. Even, if I communicate, Customer won't be remembering.

So, it is better to identify, 2 or 3 best USP, and then communicate, only on that, in a more elaborative way. So that, the Customer retain more about, this 2 or 3 characteristics of the product. Like, when Horlicks, repositioned it from the, almost like you know, like from the Doctor's prescribed brand, to Kids entertainment fun brand also, with the Ad, **a Pung of Pug ((10:35))**, that was the first re-positioning, which was done.

And, then again, Darsheel Safary, who was a very famous child star from, Taare Zameen Par, this film. And, he was used as an Ambassador, in this case. So, this kind of positioning, when we are thinking of, it is basically just one aspect, which they are focusing with this product, that is the element of fun. That time, Nutrition is there. We know that, Horlicks is a Nutritional Brand. But, it is also a fun. It is also having, some kind of fun. It is also something, which the kids can demand. That was discussed in this Ad, for the first time.

So, and that may be getting, noticed. Another Milk Union in Mumbai, what they have done is, they have placed a Billboard, in a very tall raising Building. And, in this Building, they have portrayed that, a Child is moving these building blocks. Some block of the, that particular Building. It has been placed in, one of the very upper stairs of the Building. So, it looks like, a part of the Building, has been displaced.

Because, the Child has got so much of Energy, by consuming this Drink, that he has displaced the block of the Building. So, this is somewhat, very innovative, and very catchy. So, which has got the attention of the Customer. So, this has to be understood, you know, otherwise, how much of information, should I give, and the information should pass, the Threshold of the Sensory Receptor. But, at the same time, it should not cross the terminal limit also. So, that this two consideration, I have to think of.

And, that is why, the concept of Zeigarnik campaign has come. Or, Teaser campaign, which

has a Zeigarnik effect. Zeigarnik effect, is curiosity effect. Which means, in the entire blank Billboard, there is only one line written. Many times, for the release of the movie, it is done in this way. Hidden City Real Estate also, they have used this kind of things, like one, one, sentence has written. And, every day, or every two days, they are changing the sentence. And, in the final 7th or 8th day, it is getting, the final information is coming up.

We, if you remember the Ad of, Apko Tho Kum Insurance Lene Ki Bimari Hai. This Ad was for Aegon Religare. And, this Aegon Religare Ad of Irfan Khan, was a very popular Ad. Because, it came in, so many sequels. One, Irfan Khan is having a Tiny Cup, and, he is only saying, so it is okay, because you have a Kum insurance, Apko Tho Kum Ki Adath Hai. And the final one was the, Kum insurance Lene Ki Bimari Hai. So, that has caught the attention.

So, minimum information in the Billboard, which is having the highest impact, may be of the Marketing strategy, if really they want to be within the, Absolute Threshold, and Terminal Threshold. Next, comes to the Differential Threshold. The Minimum Noticeable Difference, between two comparable Stimuli, is called the Differential Threshold. Okay. So, the Differential Threshold, we call it, the Just Noticeable Difference.

Long back, Social Psychologist Weber, he has actually devised this start, that is Just Noticeable Difference. It is the difference, between two Stimuli, which could be noticed by the Customer. For example, say, the companies like Coca Cola, they keep on changing their Logo's. But, they make a very little bit of difference, in each stage, from youthfulness, to a generally acceptable by all. That was the change, in Coca Cola's Logo's structure

If you see, from 1980's, how the Logos of Coca Cola has been changed, from the youthfulness and fun, it is actually coming from, all acceptable kind of Logo. So that, but the change is so slow, that people mainly noticed the change. And, even if they notice, they can understand it. Sometimes, the change is also complained by the Customer. For example, a Starbucks is also made a change, in their Logo.

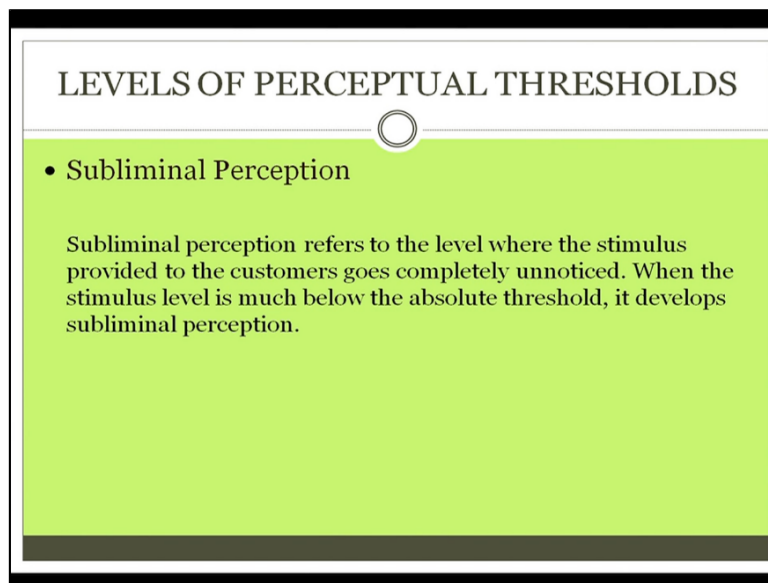
Because, Starbucks, these days, they do not use the name, Starbucks, in the Logo. Rather, they use the, little bit of different Logo. They are not using, the name of Starbucks, now. And initially, there was a complaint from the Customer side. But, Starbucks insisted, that even if there is a complaint, we will keep on going like this. Because, that actually has, to some

extent differentiated the, Customers have noticed it further.

So, somehow, the difference is, you can make, but it should be noticed by the Customers. Sometimes, what happens, the Customer get accustomed with some Stimuli. I am telling you, one of the Stimuli for the Super Markets, could be the Price Discounts. So, the Customer will usually very accustomed with that. So, the next Price Discount, they may not notice at all. If you want a sudden boost in sales, this may not work as, you know, Motivator, or this cannot work as a Stimuli, in that case.

Because, people know, that whenever we go, we will get this. So, in a Festival Season, if you get a discount, what is the big deal in it. You will think in this way. So, in Festival Season, what additional thing, you can give us. This change in the Stimuli, is known as Just Noticeable Difference.

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**LEVELS OF PERCEPTUAL THRESHOLDS**

- Subliminal Perception

Subliminal perception refers to the level where the stimulus provided to the customers goes completely unnoticed. When the stimulus level is much below the absolute threshold, it develops subliminal perception.

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### Weber's Law

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*Weber's law states that stronger the first stimulus, bigger is the added intensity required for the next stimulus to be perceived as different, and there is a fixed proportion by which with the change of the stimuli the level of response is changed.*

- Weber's law can be expressed as:  

$$\Delta R / \Delta S = K$$

 R is the response, S is the stimulus and K is a constant.

And, Weber's Law clearly states, that stronger the first Stimulus is, bigger the added intensity is required, for the next Stimulus, to be perceived as different. And, there is a fixed proportion by which, the changes of the Stimuli, is required, for a certain level of response. So, Weber's Law is expressed as, Delta-R / Delta-S. Delta-R is the Delta in Response. Whereas, Delta S is the Change in Stimulus.

And, K is Constant. And, this is the Fixed Proportion, as he is assuming. Although, there are little bit of controversy also like, exactly how can it be in fixed proportion. This kind of questions, are also been raised. But, Weber's Law is also, very well established one, in this context.

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### LEVELS OF PERCEPTUAL THRESHOLDS

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- Subliminal Perception

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The other perspective of Perceptual Threshold, is of course, the Concept of Subliminal

Perception. Subliminal Perception refers to the level, where the Stimulus provided to the Customer, goes completely unnoticed. A very less colour, very less sound, where the Customer is not even noticing, where the change is happening. And, that may not actually catch the attention of the Customers.

For example, if the Toy is not so much Coloured, the packaging is not so much Coloured, of a Chocolate, may be that, it is not catching the attention of the Child, at all. So, in this case, it is not passing the Absolute Threshold. So, it is known as Subliminal Perception. So, once again, quickly I will go through, the different Thresholds. And, what could be the task of the Marketer, in each case.

Absolute Threshold, is the minimum amount of Stimulus required, to be noticed. So, that is why, in the previous session, when I was discussing, about the Eco-Friendly Paint of Nerolac, it got unnoticed. Because, Eco-Friendliness, is not of too much of concern, when we are talking about a Paint of a Domestic House. So therefore, it did not get noticed. Whereas, when Asian Paints focused on Royal kind of Elegance, and it is for the Elegant Customer, it got noticed.

So, this actually, from something to nothing, makes sense. Terminal, at the best, how much you can noticed. And, beyond that, it will not be noticed. So, it is the task of the Marketer to be within, the Subliminal and the Terminal Threshold. The other one, is of course, the Differential Threshold. Differential Threshold is, even if I am changing the Stimuli, if I want a sudden boost in sales, then what change, I am going to do.

And, in this case, I will discuss, a very interesting phenomena, long back, which is happened with, BMW Roadster. BMW Car, is supposed to be known as, a very Elegant Car, and it was a Bavarian Mystic. And, the Headquarter is in Munich, Germany, as we know. The Car used to look, very Elegant. The Design was very, very, Elegant. The Colour, which everything was at par, to that European Elegance, and Bavarian Mystic, and Precision Engineering sort of.

But suddenly, BMW noticed, that they have, a kind of Plant in Spartanburg, which is underutilised. So, they thought that, but Spartanburg is an US plant. So, if they have to cater from, I mean, they have to develop the cars from there, and sell in Us and Canada, which is an upcoming Car Market. Because, lot of First-Generation Car buyers, were there, at that

time. So, what to do, in this case, **out of market.**((20:47)) Because, European Mystic, this American First-Generation Customers may not be, finding any, attachment to that.

So therefore, BMW Roadster, actually made a Movie placement, in the Golden Eye Movie, where Pierce Brosnan, first time played as, James Bond. So, and the Car, earlier James Bonds Movies used was, the Aston Martin Car. And, that was replaced by BMW Roadster, in this Movie. Altogether, in the Movie, may be around 90 seconds, the Car has been shown. But, that it suffices the purpose, as James Bond is saying, that it is my new Car.

So, it is a New Car, for the New Bond. And, that is, James Bond has a Global Appeal. So, it has immediately connected with the Global Customers. And, People started demanding the Car, as James Bond's Car, I want to book the, James Bond's Car. And, it has actually reached a point of infatuation, as you can say, about the Car. So, which means, this otherwise, if only this Car was been launched, in the same Bavarian Mystic, this image was been continued, the Customers may not have noticed it at all.

So, this was a cue, which was given. Similarly, Queensland Tourism in Australia, during the economic crunch, where the Tourism all over the world was suffering, Australia was not an exception. So, in that case, Queensland Tourism, came with the job offer, of an Island Caretaker. And, that was throughout the Social Media and everything, it has created a kind of buzz. And, soon after that buzz, lot of Applicants, started applying, so much so, that the Website got crashed.

It is, too many Facebook, you know, Sharing's, Facebook visits, so many all Social networks, almost all, was visited with this. Pope, gave an opinion about it. Then, BBC has covered this. And, as a result, it was noticed so much, that you know, this particular Ad, has actually won, so many awards, and this Hamilton Islands, particularly. And, Virgin Airways, they have started Airlines, from up to this Hamilton Islands.

Other things also like, Amway, has started their, Annual Conference, in Queensland. So, so many things. It has got noticed, to Corporate Users, as well as, to the Australian Tourism, has got a boost out of it. So, this is what, is the Just Noticeable Difference. It is not only the earlier Stimulus; the way you have positioned your Brand earlier, but how you can, again boost up the interest of the Customer. That is what, as a Marketer, you have to think.

You should not be allowing your Customer, to forget about your Brand. So, every new and new Stimuli, will help you. And obviously, you have to go, beyond your Subliminal Perception, so as to get noticed. Although, there has been some controversy, some Customers they said that, some say searches, they have said that, Subliminal Perception, sometimes work. But, ideally, in a developing country like, in our case, we should be focusing, somewhere, within Absolute Threshold, and the Terminal Threshold.

And, we have to be extremely careful, about the Weber's Law, and how do we actually differentiate, you know, how do we create distinction, in the understanding. So, right now, in this Module, what we have covered is, just the Basic Concept of Perception, and the Levels of Perceptual Threshold. And, the Next Lecture of Perception, would be about the Process of Perception Formation, and its Interrelation between, Perception and Consumer Imagery. So, till then, Good Bye.