

Ocean Basket's latest campaign is a fine expression of food art

 By [Lauren Hartzenberg](#)

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Ocean Basket's unique 'Mediterrasian' sushi offering is on dazzling display in the recently launched #TheArtOfFusion brand campaign. Digital agency So Interactive, the creative force behind the campaign, was briefed by the popular seafood eatery to take its new sushi range to the next level using innovative media. The result features World Sushi Champion and Ocean Basket's sushi innovation head, Pepi Anevski, and a skilful directorial display of food photography.

According to the agency, it set out to break through the clutter in the casual dining space by representing Ocean Basket's sushi as a feast of flavours, enticing the heart and mouth to experience an all-round adventure.

"It was important for us to give the viewer an experience beyond the copy and photography," says So Interactive's creative director, Letitia Lerm.

"You don't break through the mould by doing what you've always done just because it works; you break through the mould by shaking things up, stepping outside the proverbial box and taking risks."

Here, Lerm elaborates on the power of food porn, the creative process behind the campaign, and the relationship that's been fostered between So Interactive and long-time client Ocean Basket.

How did So Interactive come up with the idea for the #TheArtOfFusion campaign?

We are in the age where we are prioritising experiences over material things; we prefer to spend money on living rather than having. Studies show that spending on non-essentials, which includes dining out, will grow by 22% over the next five years. As experiences are shared on social media, we prioritise spending on experiences to be part of a shared conversation.

Ocean Basket's extended sushi range is a unique experience, combining the best of Asian and Mediterranean flavours to meet a variety of exotic palates – a unique experience that is exclusive to Ocean Basket.



Letitia Lerm

We eat with our eyes; the mere sight of delicious food stimulates the appetite. Physiologically, food porn creates hunger where there previously wasn't any. When we see images of appealing food, blood rushes to the parts of our brain associated with taste. Food sells food and sushi sells sushi.

World Sushi Champion and Ocean Basket's sushi innovation head, Pepi Anevski, developed eight new sushi creations and by identifying him it personalises the offering and brings it closer to the diners. Each chef is unique, and competitors can't offer what each chef literally brings to the table. Pepi invented these appealing small pieces of art giving them a fusion of flavour to experience.

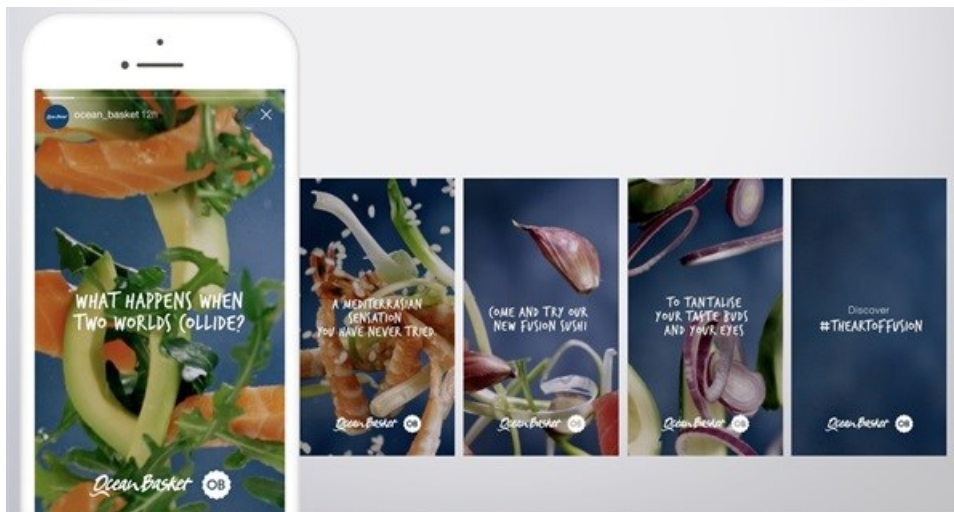
We wanted to present 'Mediterrasian' sushi as small pieces of art to diners, by showcasing the fusion experience in a visually appealing manner. The idea shaped into #TheArtOfFusion - and the creative was born from there, using Facebook's

Canvas ad format as the main digital element to launch the campaign.

■ **How does it work exactly?**

There truly is something magical about seeing fresh food move at 1,500 frames per second and the use of slow motion clips demonstrate a collage of artistic integration, inviting viewers to step inside the flavour combinations of the individual creations.

The art direction of the photography captured the essence of food art at its finest; we pushed boundaries beyond the scope of previous Ocean Basket campaigns. We rolled out the elements cross-platform, which included carousel advertising and the full spectrum of social media interfaces.



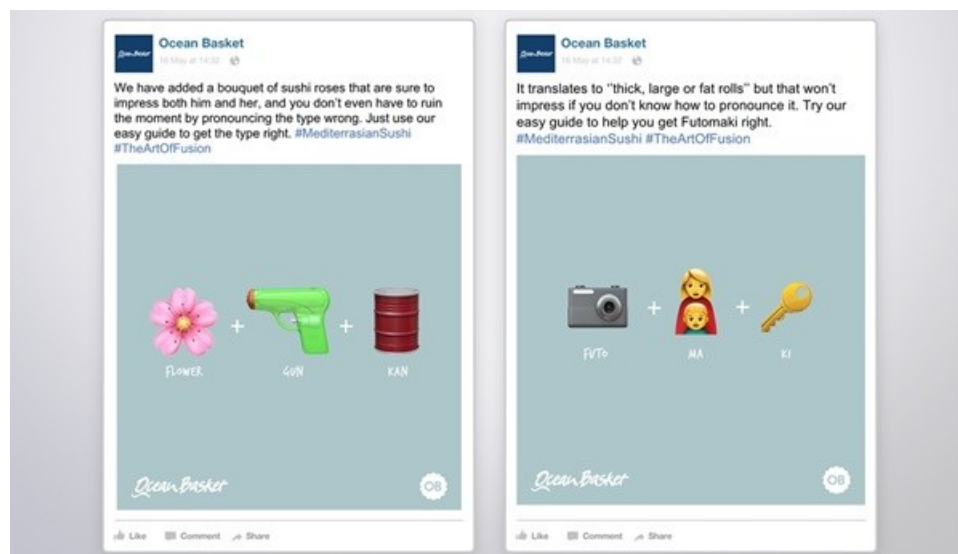
Facebook Canvas ads are not uncommon in the field but is a new territory for local food brands. Our Ocean Basket campaign offered social media audiences a new and authentic visual experience, amplifying the impact of the beautiful imagery and video content.

So far the campaign has received a welcome reception, so much so, that we were awarded an ATL TVC that has since been transferred to the big screen, now flying in cinemas around South Africa.

■ **Comment on your experience working with Ocean Basket as a client.**

Ocean Basket is a dynamic forward thinking brand that has given So Interactive the opportunity to take creative risks, allowing us the freedom to push the thinking in the digital space and beyond.

We have worked with Ocean Basket for over eight years, developing an incredible unified partnership built on trust and integrity. This has been the foundation for taking the brand from strength to strength. Run on a family culture, the brand fosters the feeling that you are always welcome, and the team's love for the brand is infectious.



■ What's the objective of the campaign in terms of results?

The objective is to increase awareness and educate the market on a unique sushi offering that is exclusive to Ocean Basket, drive sales in the sushi category and grow foot trade over the next three months.

■ When does the campaign run until, and what's next?

The campaign runs until the end of December, we are going into 2018 with a blank canvas leveraging off our learnings of this year. Watch this space!

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