Helen + Gertrude

Impact Report

2025

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Introduction

Who We Are

Helen + Gertrude is an independent, award-winning, integrated digital marketing and advertising agency founded in December 2016 and headquartered in Rochester, New York. With a team of 32 full-time professionals, we've built our reputation on a unique cross-functional approach that seamlessly integrates creative services, including an in-house video and photo production team, media strategy, and data analytics to make brand strategies more efficient and effective.

While our commitment to data-informed creative sets us apart, we recognize data is just one part of the equation. That's why we bring a human-centered design perspective into our work using both our heads and our hearts to ensure your digital marketing achieves statistical and emotional significance.

As a certified Women's Business Enterprise (WBE), Women-Owned Small Business (WOSB), and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), we bring diverse perspectives to every project. Our industry recognition includes certifications such as Meta Business Partner and Google Partner, and we've been named a Workplace Leader in DEI by 540 WMain.

Our 2023 and 2024 Impact Reports provide a transparent look into our values, progress, and priorities, offering a clear reflection of our culture in action. From sustainability initiatives to DEIA efforts and community partnerships, these reports showcase how we live our mission daily and continuously strive to create a workplace where purpose, inclusion, and accountability are at the forefront. These yearly reports offer our team, clients, and potential partners a clear view of the values that drive everything we do.

Introduction

Letter from Becca

I have always been one to say that I thrive on change. You can't survive in this industry if you don't. Marketers must constantly reinvent ourselves and how our work gets done. 2025 put Helen + Gertrude to the test. It was a year defined by change. Our leadership team underwent a massive shift, we restructured how we service our clients, and we brought on numerous new team members, each bringing their own unique flair to our culture.

Some of the changes we endured were self-inflicted, as our yearly theme that would guide us through 2025 was "Level Up." The theme pressured us to reach beyond our own walls and bring in new, fresh perspectives through hiring as well as outside expert advisors on various topics. We used our circumstances as an opportunity to evolve the way we operated with each other and our clients. We were intentional with each pivot and decision we made as a team.

As a women-owned agency, we also deepened our commitment to the causes that matter most to us. In 2025, we stepped up as the Digital Marketing Partners for the Womens' Health Innovation Summit (WHIS), one of the largest gatherings of women's health leaders in the country. It felt like exactly the right room to be in, and we're excited to return in 2026.

Human-centered continues to be the heart and soul of what makes Helen + Gertrude successful. The faces and names you see on these pages, on our website, and on calls, are the best of the best, in expertise and soul. Each year, our impact report allows us to celebrate how much heart goes into our day-to-day, the client stories we get to tell, the health advancements we get to champion, and the community we are a part of.

Grab a beverage of your choosing and settle into some of the work we are so proud of from 2025.

Cheers,

Becca Post, Founder + CEO

Company Culture

Company Culture

Building a Community

01 H+G Birthday at Bitter Honey

In January, we celebrated our eighth (!) year of business the best way we know how: margaritas, tacos, and a beautiful cake made by our in-house baker extraordinaire, Tegan. We gathered for a casual happy hour at Bitter Honey, our trusty downstairs neighbor, following our annual holiday gift exchange. It was a night of laughs, memories, and lots of guac, made even better by getting to catch up with some of our remote team members based out of state. Our main takeaway? While we love a fancy seated dinner and organized team activities, sometimes a casual happy hour is the best way to connect.

02 Babies Welcomed

Three new arrivals made this year feel a little more full. Charlie arrived for Molly. Maeve for Kaeley. And Phoebe for Ashley. It was the kind of year where you see someone disappear for a few months and come back fundamentally changed. Where you watch a colleague hold a tiny human and realize you've never quite seen them like that before. Where the all company chat gets a photo—usually blurry, always perfect—and everyone stops what they're doing.

We're not the type to get sentimental easily. But there's something about welcoming new people into the world while they're still on your team's radar. It feels like we're building something that matters beyond the immediate.

03 Winter Break

For the first time, Helen + Gertrude officially closed the office between Christmas and New Year's to give our team truly uninterrupted time to disconnect, recharge, and be fully present. Across the board, team members shared that the break allowed them to prioritize what matters most: quality time with family and friends, embracing traditions, and simply slowing down after a busy year. Whether traveling, enjoying cozy moments at home, getting outdoors, or marking major life events, the common thread was a sense of restoration and gratitude. The time off not only supported mental and physical well-being, but also enabled everyone to return in 2026 feeling refreshed, energized, and ready to start strong.

Company Culture

HCP Media Training

About 50% of our clients at Helen + Gertrude fall within the healthcare industry. This means our work frequently reaches patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals, highlighting the importance of our agency's cross-collaboration given the complexity, sensitivity, and regulation of this space. As this vertical continues to grow, the Media and Insights team led a company-wide HCP Media 101 session designed to bring teams together and build a shared foundation of knowledge. The session created space for learning across disciplines and encouraged open dialogue and questions. It covered key considerations like HCP targeting, platform capabilities, measurement approaches, MLR requirements, and creative best practices, reinforcing our culture of continuous learning and ensuring teams are prepared to navigate healthcare marketing with confidence.

PulsePoint Lunch + Learn

In April, we had the pleasure of learning from one of our valued programmatic partners, PulsePoint. During this lunch & learn session, we dove deeper into understanding ways to improve our purpose-built healthcare programmatic campaigns.

As our digital campaigns continue to grow more complex, the team recognized the value of PulsePoint's lucrative demand-side platform (DSP) capabilities and outlined more capabilities to handle the healthcare industry's specialized privacy and regulatory standards. Our goal was to better understand ways to demonstrate how we can maximize our media results and confidently reach target healthcare providers (HCPs), cutting down on wasted ad spend and maintaining our trusted campaign results.

The presentation highlighted practical advantages like PulsePoint's continuously validated first-party NPI database—which delivers up to 90% realized reach—and their exclusive access to premium environments like EHRs. Several team members agreed that seeing how PulsePoint natively handles HIPAA compliance inspired confidence that we can successfully tie our media exposure directly to real-world prescribing outcomes.

Company Culture

Tegan's Treats

Over the years, our wonderful Media and Insights Lead, Tegan, has delighted us with her homemade creations—affectionately known as Tegan's Treats. Whether we're wrapping up a long client meeting or enjoying a slower day, her treats never fail to bring a smile to everyone's face.

While it was no easy task, we've rounded up our top three favorite Tegan's Treats of all time below:

Best in Show

Vegan Banana Muffins

Ding ding ding, we've got a winner!! Taking the crown for the best Tegan Treat are the vegan banana muffins! Bursting with rich, cozy flavor and guaranteed to warm hearts (and bellies), these little delights rose straight to the top.

Second Best

S'mores Bars

Who doesn't love a s'more? Turns out it's one of the top favorite treats at H+G! The perfect excuse for a quick bite of gooey marshmallow and melty chocolate goodness.

Third Best

Pecan Blondies

Last but certainly not least: the pecan blondies! Packed with rich, buttery flavor and that perfectly satisfying crunch, these treats bring the sweet AND the sass in every bite.

Company Culture

AEO 101 with Hannah

If "AI" was the 2025 buzzword of the year across the world, "AEO" likely held that spot across the marketing industry. Answer Engine Optimization ("AEO") is the process of optimizing digital content so that AI-powered search engines like ChatGPT, Gemini, and Perplexity can reference or cite your brand in their answers. Given that half of consumers use AI-powered search and the majority of those say it's the top digital source used to make buying decisions, AI is already having a significant impact in the advertising landscape.

As our agency works to stay on top of the latest digital best practices, we put together a taskforce to get our creative services teams up and running with AEO. Our copy team dove into researching how AEO best practices impact our Search Engine Marketing (SEM) and website content work for clients.

Our key takeaways:

- To most effectively reach your audience through AI-powered platforms, brands need to understand what questions their consumers are asking ("search intent") and which sources are shaping answers.
- AEO relies on E-E-A-T: Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness to establish credibility.
- AI likes direct answers that are concise, get to the point quickly, and use clear headers, FAQs, bullets, etc. to structure responses.

We've also worked to incorporate AEO best practices into our own Helen + Gertrude digital presence, by keeping a close eye on the impact that AI search models play on organic search. Our Marketing Manager, Hannah, regularly pulls reporting on hg.agency's website performance, and noticed some big changes on site impressions in 2025. This is expected, as users are clicking through to websites less frequently due to AEO answers providing the information directly. We made quick updates to our landing pages to be optimized for the changing search landscape, including FAQ sections, and shortened bullets for AI models to easily reference.

This then pulled our content forward for specific relevant queries, like "women-owned marketing agency" or "women's health advertising" more often. We've seen a large uptick in qualified leads and potential clients reaching out to us who have found us through ChatGPT and continue to monitor the traffic to the site from AI models (which increases every month!).

Company Culture

How We Survived a Major Leadership Transition

Every business eventually faces a moment (usually many moments, can we say COVID?) that tests its foundation. Ours came in early 2025, when our Co-founder and Chief of Strategy, Leire Bascaran, made the courageous decision to step away after eight years.

Leire was a presence at Helen + Gertrude, sharp, adaptable, and the kind of strategic partner clients valued. Internally, she was a mentor who raised the bar. Her legacy is woven into how this agency operates. Running a business takes everything you have, and knowing when to choose yourself is not a weakness. But alas, this is not a eulogy, but a reflection on how Helen + Gertrude's core human-centered foundation allowed us to adapt and grow through this change.

As a business, we made sure the team and clients were well taken care of through the transition. This meant honest conversations with our team, personal outreach to every client, and deliberate onboarding so no one felt the ground shift beneath them. We brought in new leadership and a fresh perspective with the addition of Lydia de Martino as our VP of Client Services.

In addition to new team members, our existing team stepped up. Leire had carried a lot. Her departure created room for others to grow. Abbey Greendyke stepped into her role as Director of Media + Insights. We even redesigned how our client services team operates, a structural improvement that will serve our business better for years to come.

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental Sustainability

Coffee & Climate Action:

Climate Solutions Accelerator of Genesee Finger Lakes

In January, Becca and Sammy attended a community "Coffee & Climate Action" meeting at a local bookstore and café. The event was hosted by the Climate Solutions Accelerator, a nonprofit dedicated to climate mobilization in the nine-county Genesee-Finger Lakes Region of western New York. This was an informal gathering to discuss the balance of taking urgent, bold climate action, while ensuring inclusivity and equity in the process.

What stood out from the beginning of the meeting was the mutual respect and acknowledgment that we're all at different points in our climate advocacy journey. With a movement as big as combating the climate crisis, we need people on all levels—ranging from those handcuffing themselves to a pipeline, to those working from within the current system to promote change. Every role matters.

From discussing home solar panel recommendations and upcoming advocacy events in Albany, to how to discourage local restaurants from including so much plastic in takeout packaging, the meeting was a great way to casually connect with fellow climate activists in our community and learn about different local initiatives.

Climate advocacy can feel overwhelming and isolating, given the magnitude of the change required and the fragmented nature of the components that must work together. The opportunity to meet others who are dedicated to the cause, share our hopes and fears, and highlight the social justice component of sustainability was a refreshing reminder that none of us are in this alone. It also served as the perfect lead-up to the Climate Solutions Summit the following April!

Prop Donations

In 2025, we were able to donate leftover props to two amazing organizations in Rochester that are always in need of donations. First, we donated to-go food containers, silverware, cups, and more to the Northside Church of Christ Meal Program, which is a Foodlink partner. They were leftovers from multiple shoots with an online meal service client and, since these types of products are typically sold in bulk, we had tons of open, unused items. Thankfully, it was perfect for the meal program!

Second, we donated baby products to the Center for Youth, who maintain a community closet. The props were used for a lifestyle shoot that included like-new baby blankets, stuffed animals, books, toys, burping cloths, and diapers that deserved to go to a loving home in need.

Environmental Sustainability

Four Projects That Had Everyone Talking

Our Google Chat blew up. Meetings ran long. Someone sprinted to a train station the moment our work went live. These are the four projects we couldn't shut up about in 2025.

Grow NY

There's a reason they call it "The Room Where It Happens." Cornell's food and ag startup competition pulls in people with serious credentials—UC Davis, MIT, folks from Argentina—who are solving real problems. Carbon-negative feedstocks. Patented dietary calcium chews. And there's a million dollars on the line, which for some of these founders means the difference between an idea and a scaled business. We were in the Finger Lakes, in a room with people who could change how we eat, and our job was to help the world understand why it mattered. It felt impossible and essential at once.

South Coast Rail

The files shipped. We waited. Then the client told us it was live—eight massive panels, some over 12 feet tall, mounted as sound barriers in the station. Our designer Caleb basically sprinted there. The chat emoji count hit an all-time high. Spanish and Portuguese signage for a line that literally connects Little Portugal to Boston. We believe transit should be for everyone—and the creative should too. It went straight into our case studies because seeing it there made it real in a way nothing else could.

Healthy Living

A sweet potato is a humble root vegetable. Until we started talking to the growers and writing copy that made people actually see them. We gave them the celebrity treatment—interviewed the people who grew them, made the ordinary sound the way it actually tastes. Our team got genuinely into it. How beautiful are those sweet potatoes? What makes this one special? Turns out, a lot.

Dickinson's

Someone sent a picture of brush cutters in the Connecticut backwoods harvesting witch hazel, and our production team thread exploded. Then we drove to their facility to film—and it was like being inside Willy Wonka's factory. Watching wood chips transform into high-end toner, watching a family talk about why they care this much about getting it right. That's the kind of detail work that makes us nerds about this stuff.

Environmental Sustainability

South Coast Rail

As a Massachusetts resident I have most used the South Station Bus terminal when traveling to NYC ... I remember walking by the building but I didn't really recognize it as a bus terminal until I took my first bus trip with my mom. I'd say now with the large display that I got to design, it's much more recognizable and memorable. I also hope that the wayfinding elements on the display help travelers and tourists, as it's pretty confusing that the South Station Bus Terminal is different from the South Station Train Terminal.

Environmental Sustainability

Climate Summit Sponsorship

Since 2023, Helen + Gertrude has been a proud sponsor of the Climate Solutions Accelerator of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region's Annual Climate Summit. In 2025, the theme of the summit was to "Co-Create our Future Together" with a focus on building the skills, knowledge, and relationships we will need to collaboratively envision and cultivate a healthier, more equitable, and regenerative future for our region.

Following panel sessions, attendees had the opportunity to join breakout discussions across a wide range of topics. We each chose three (a hard decision!) that sounded most interesting, which was a great chance to dive deeper into conversations that we personally connected with. These smaller group discussions included topic leaders and fellow community members exploring topics such as mutual aid, transportation, the role of individuals versus organizations, and more, with a focus on local climate advocacy. The relaxed, conversational format made it easy to share perspectives, learn from one another, and walk away with fresh ideas to support all of our ongoing work.

One of the most memorable events during the Summit was a performance and interactive experience hosted by Garth Fagan Dance. Performers representing different elements (sun, water, Earth) danced solo and then together, representing the critical need for (and beauty of) collaboration in climate preservation work. Audience members participated through movements like stomping, clapping, and swaying, turning the convention center into a lively, vibrant space of partnership. In addition to bringing energy and movement, the performance was an important reminder of art's valuable role in climate advocacy.

Mend and Lend Clothing Exchange
with Tegan

In November, we hosted a "Mend and Lend" event hosted by Tegan, our Media + Insights Lead and sewing extraordinaire. After getting into sewing as a kid, Tegan revisited the hobby during the pandemic and started making full garments for herself for the first time, which also made her more conscious of fashion consumption. Our goal was to inspire our teammates to mend their existing clothes, shoes, and other items before replacing them, cutting down on waste and helping tackle the fast-fashion crisis.

Tegan shared practical tips for mending broken seam stitches, dropped hems, holes, and more, as well as ideas for "decorative fixes" like darning, embroidery, and patching. Several team members agreed that it inspired them to see if something could be repaired before immediately replacing it, and also to pick up creative sewing as a hobby!

> **"I hope people walked away from our Mend and Lend session knowing a bit more about the downsides of fast fashion and how they can consciously shop and maintain their clothes to help mitigate this problem. Hopefully it encourages them to think twice when they're considering throwing away a garment, considering if it could be saved, altered, or upcycled."**

Tegan Jenner
Media + Insights Lead

Mend and Lend Clothing Exchange
with Tegan

Following Tegan's presentation, we had an office-wide clothing swap (the "Lend" part of the event!) where teammates brought in garments they no longer needed, and we "shopped" each other's donations. We're looking forward to hosting more events in the future where our team can share their personal passions, provide inspiration, and encourage each other along every stage of environmental advocacy.

> **"Learning about different ways to patch and repair fabric was really interesting, and I've already used some of the techniques on a few of my favorite pieces that had been worn down over the years from frequent use. I think the Lunch + Learns are a great way to step away from the day-to-day, clear your head, and spend some time enjoying and learning hobbies from others around you."**

Mackenzie Patterson
Media Strategist

PS: Check out some of Tegan's favorite "Before and Afters":

Before **After**

Before **After**

Social + Community Impact

Social + Community Impact

Genesee Land Trust

The Genesee Land Trust strives to preserve and protect natural lands and waterways that enhance the communities of the Greater Rochester Region. To support the mission that everyone should feel welcome to experience and explore these protected places, we helped develop new audience engagement guidelines designed to expand reach and better connect with diverse communities outside of the GLT's usual demographic including the trans and queer communities, parents, climate refugees, and elders.

To accomplish this, we began by analyzing our audiences through the lens of their personal values and perceptions of sustainability efforts within the community. This research revealed a shared desire to enjoy the outdoors, alongside barriers that left many feeling excluded from these spaces or concerned about the long-term future of their lands. These insights informed the development of tailored goals for each audience segment, as well as targeted messaging and creative concepts designed to drive deeper engagement. The following goals highlight

01 Elders

Goal: Help them preserve the memory of treasured outdoor spaces. Their desire to enjoy the outdoors not only stems from nostalgia but returning to a way of life that feels exciting.

02 Climate Refugees

Goal: Show them that access to nature is an open invitation to all, promoting a welcoming place to ensure permanence of health, home and family — now and in the future.

03 LGBTQIA+

Goal: Help them see the wilderness not as a place to escape, but a place they can be wildly themselves. Their concern about being erased is our fight, too, as we say together, "We're not going anywhere."

04 Parents

Goal: Help them see GLT as an opportunity for screen-free shared experiences.

In bringing these strategies together, our work reinforces the GLT's commitment to ensuring that protected lands are not only preserved, but truly shared. By grounding our approach in the lived experiences, values, and concerns of each audience, we move beyond access as a concept and toward belonging as a practice.

Ultimately, this effort is all about reshaping who feels seen, valued, and included in the outdoors. By continuing to listen, adapt, and show up with intention, the GLT can cultivate a future where every person not only feels welcome in nature, but knows they have a place within it.each individual group we set out to reach.

Making an Impact Together:

2025 Day of Caring at The Center For Youth.

In May 2025, our team visited The Center For Youth during the Day of Caring. The center's physical spaces are extremely important for the community and we were able to help them with maintenance inside and outside. Outside, a group of Helen + Gertrude team members cleared the parking lot, gardens, walkways of weeds, debris, and leaves and cleaned out and rearranged their garage space that is used to store supplies and tools. Lastly, another team was upstairs organizing and labeling donated clothes and home goods for their youth closet. This is a space where their community can get much needed items like jackets, backpacks, baby shoes, diapers, and more for free.

Social + Community Impact

A Visit from Flat Josh and The Child Advocacy Center of Greater Rochester

In October 2025, our office had a visit from the one and only Flat Josh Allen, thanks to the Child Advocacy Center of Greater Rochester. He is pretty similar to the OG, just slightly more two dimensional. As our office is located in Rochester NY, aka Western NY, we put on our best Bills gear and welcomed Flat Josh in with open arms, happy to support an organization making a real difference in the lives of children across our region. The paparazzi came ready, and the photos were shared across both our agency's social media and the organization's pages, inspiring others to donate, welcome Josh in, and learn more about the incredible work the Child Advocacy Center does for kids in our community. We had the honor of partnering with the organization in 2024, providing new brand guidelines, an updated website, and video promoting their 20th anniversary celebration.

Social + Community Impact

Inclusion & Empowerment:

RIT Women in Leadership Summit

When you're new to a job, you inherit the culture someone else made. You show up, learn the rules, and keep your head down. But Amy Sadler and Sammy Boyd laid the groundwork for a different narrative at RIT's Women's Leadership Summit.

They led a workshop on the seemingly simple idea that your values and your work don't have to live in separate boxes. Amy, our creative services lead of production, and Sammy, a senior copywriter, asked the room,

> **"What if understanding who you are actually shaped the culture around you?"**

The participants came with practical concerns. How do I land my first job? What goes in a portfolio? Standard stuff. But during the discussion, something shifted. Amy and Sammy kept circling back to the same point. You have more power than you think.

They coached the group to take time to understand what you care about and notice where it aligns with the field you're entering. That overlap matters. It can show you what actions you want to take to live your values more fully at work. It can also reveal what isn't a fit, and that's equally important information.

They also shared that these aren't just soft skills. Forbes Business Council reports that aligning your work with personal values reduces burnout and boosts creative thinking. For us, it's non-negotiable. The work we do demands diverse perspectives and unexpected approaches. You don't get there by leaving yourself at the door.
What struck us most was watching these professionals realize they didn't have to wait for permission to shape their workplaces or climb some ladder to make a difference. Understanding who they are and what they stand for is something they can leverage right now.

We do these workshops because we believe in alignment. Your values and your work shouldn't be at odds. When they aren't, you feel it. Your days feel different. Your relationships with people around you feel different.

When leaders show up as themselves—honest about what matters to them—it gives everyone permission to do the same. It's how you actually know the people you work with.
And that matters. How we treat each other, day to day, comes down to how much of ourselves we're willing to bring. We need more leaders showing up this way.

Our Work Outside of Work

Outside of our client work, we organize, build, and invest in causes we believe in. The tasks may change with the season, but the passion we bring to the organizations we're involved in remains constant. Here's what our team tackled this year.

Matt Kirsch
Copywriter

Our resident gardener—and senior copywriter—partnered with Finger Lakes-based company Fruition Seeds to craft a **custom heirloom rainbow chard seed packet to share during all of Western New York's Prides events.** This wordsmith went beyond the typical care instructions and invited the broader community to care for one another, just as tending seeds helps them take root, grow, and thrive.

Amy Sadler
Creative Services Lead, Production

We all know her for the way she puts people instantly at ease in front of the camera. Recently, our creative services lead of production stepped outside the studio to become a fly on the wall while kids at The Center for Youth shot hoops, capturing what she described as "a moment to get out of their daily lives and be a kid." Her work there was even featured on Rochester's local NPR station WXXI. She also joined the Marketing & Communications Committee at the George Eastman Museum—one of the country's premier photography and motion picture museums—helping expand its reach and influence well beyond Rochester.

Becca Post
Founder + CEO

Our CEO lent her voice to help our region mobilize around climate action. Joining forces with the Rochester chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL), she organized a community gathering at her rural local library where they discussed how the changing climate affects their agriculturally-rich region and how to get in involved with CCL to be heard by local lawmakers. She also was invited as a thought leader alongside Indigenous leader, Paul Winnie, and University of Rochester professor, Solveiga Armoskaite, in a conversation through the Regeneration Futures Lab centering on marketing, advertising, and consumerism. They examined the assumptions that hold us back from understanding climate change, consumption, and what we can actually do about it.

Women's Health & WHIS

In 2025 we not only attended WHIS, the premier event for women's health innovation, we also sponsored it as their Digital Marketing Partners. As a women-owned company, we are passionate about advocating for health initiatives and supporting women health brands striving to make an impact. WHIS is one of the largest gatherings of women's health leaders, bringing together investors, physicians, and policy leaders. Attending was a clear choice for us, as it provided a unique opportunity to connect with key stakeholders and make a meaningful impact in this space.

During the event we were able to get a peek into all of the amazing advancements happening in the world of women's health. It was truly inspiring to be among so many like-minded people who have identified issues in the industry and are working towards providing and building services to help support women, many of whom have risen up to the challenge through their own personal experiences. We were so proud to support this group and their efforts. Seeing a collection of people who are taking the correct steps towards innovative care filled us with hope for a bright future in women's health. We were also happy to contribute a little extra sweetness to the day with some chocolates from women-owned Rochester-based chocolatier, Laughing Gull Chocolates, and next year, we promise to bring even more!

We are so excited to attend again in 2026 and to continue advocating for women's health. Through strategic campaign development, thoughtful insights, and dedicated marketing support, we remain committed to advancing initiatives that support the health and well-being of all women and women-identifying individuals.

Health Equity

In April, Becca and Séamus attended the Health Equity in Clinical Trials Congress in Atlanta, Georgia. Together, they spent several days attending seminars about increasing access to care for marginalized groups. We already know that women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ people face barriers when trying to access healthcare. What we need to do now is find ways to identify, acknowledge, and remove those barriers. One speaker finished with a quote that stayed with us and continues to spur our work: "Equity is not aspirational - it is necessary."

Social + Community Impact

2025 BCAM Campaign

We've proudly supported Hologic's Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM) campaign for over 4 years now, helping share education about breast cancer with patients and providers and drive mammogram visits among eligible women. This year, we were tasked with being even bolder, more colorful, and "cheekier" than ever before—the kind of ask we love to receive!

Our 2025 campaign was an extension of our previous "Bust the Myth" work, this time centered around the use of quotation marks (") and asterisks (**) symbolizing the correction of common misinformation shared in the conversation around breast cancer. Before jumping into content, we developed an extensive Campaign Guidelines document based on previous performance and updated audience research. This included overall brand positioning, personality and tone, color palette and typography guidance, animated motion direction, and direct copy examples showcasing our sassy—never snarky—tone (ex. Let's be real...a mammogram is not the most uncomfortable thing you've ever done (hello beauty treatments) But it could be the most lifesaving!

Based on audience research and previous campaign performance, we targeted women already within the age range recommended for screening, those younger (35+) seeking reliable, factual information, and healthcare professionals helping women understand their risks.

The result was a cross-channel, full-funnel campaign that included placements across Meta, LinkedIn, TikTok, podcasts, search, DOOH, in-office flyers, CTV, and even a Times Square NASDAQ tower animation.

And speaking of results, the digital campaign generated over 52M impressions, nearly 75k clicks, and 3,150 "Find a Facility Near Me" leads from patients.

Our work with Hologic for Breast Cancer Awareness Month is one of our favorite campaigns each year. Furthering the conversation about women's health, collaborating closely across our creative and media teams, and employing full-funnel tactics to bring a potentially lifesaving message to the forefront—it has all the components of what we do best at Helen + Gertrude.

Helen + Gertrude

Visit ***hg.agency*** to learn more or contact us at ***info@hg.agency***

Where We Donated Our Time and Money

We care deeply about building thriving communities where our team members live. Each year, Helen + Gertrude matches charitable donations of up to $200 per team member and allows paid volunteer hours. These are the organizations we are proud to have supported in 2025:

101 hours across 10 organizations

Rochester Mutual Aid Network

WXXI

Foodlink
NOURISHING LIVES

Worker Justice Center *of New York*

The Center for Youth

The Child Advocacy Center of Greater Rochester

Climate Solutions Accelerator
of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region

Rochester City School District

Genesee Land Trust

RA

Client Highlights

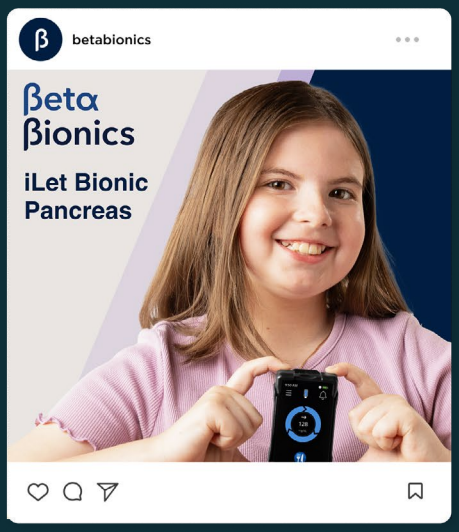
Three (More) Projects We're Proud Of
2025 brought a lot of great work—too much to fit in just one section, in fact!

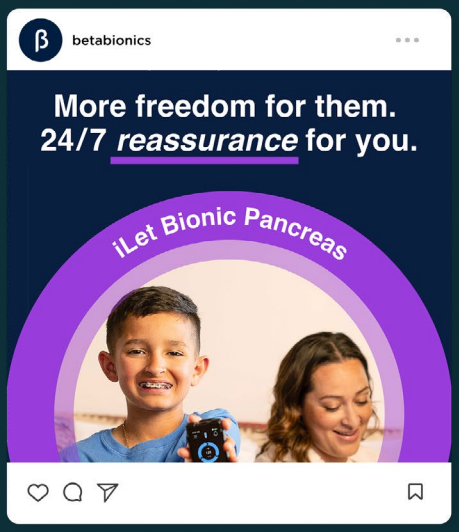
Beta Bionics

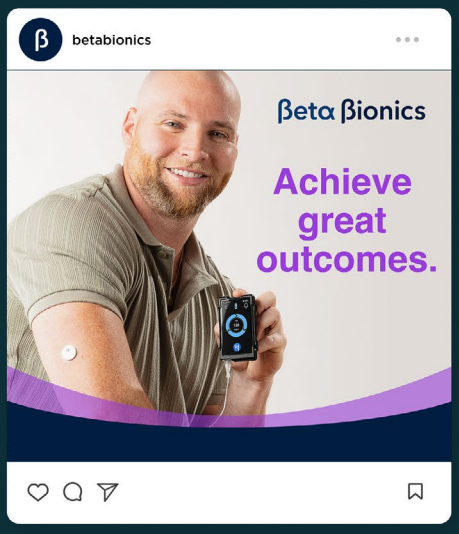
The "mental burden" of diabetes is real, and those living with type one experience it every day. To hear firsthand about diabetes stress, we traveled to San Diego for a two-day shoot with real users (including those as young as 10!) of the iLet Bionic Pancreas, Beta Bionics' revolutionary insulin delivery system. The iLet automates insulin delivery and removes the need to count carbs, so users can think about diabetes less. Our shoot helped us communicate the benefits of this "mental relief" across various settings, ultimately helping more people with type one diabetes discover how the iLet could benefit them.

> **Featuring real patients as talent in the 2025 Beta Bionic's video shoot allowed us to not only offer an authentic approach to the stories being told, but we also were able to see the impact of the iLet in-use in real time.**
>
> **I'll never forget when we promptly paused filming once a parent noticed their child was in need of a snack using the Bionic Circle app. The product is really powerful, and this shoot was proof of how it alleviates cognitive mental load both between the parents and the patients. It also allowed everyone on set to collaborate, optimizing for the best experience for everyone (huge shoutout to the Beta Bionics team, Drew McGill, and his talented crew for the on-set ease!)"**

MacKenzi Nelson
Art Director







Client Highlights

Hologic: Group B Strep

Some concerning stats our team recently learned: up to 30% of pregnant women carry Group B Strep (GBS), a virus that can have serious health effects or even be fatal to newborns if transmitted during delivery.1 Although third-trimester screening for GBS is standard and the virus is easily treated if detected, a large percentage of newborns who develop early onset GBS disease are born from mothers with a negative culture-based GBS screening test, indicating a critical gap in test accuracy and sensitivity.[1,2]

Hologic's Panther Fusion® GBS Assay is helping close this gap using nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) technology that's proven to be more sensitive than culture-based tests. That means potentially saving newborn lives, while prioritizing women's health and protecting families.[3]

To help communicate awareness of this potentially lifesaving technology, our team created an email sequence campaign and LinkedIn ads targeting healthcare professionals. Emotional video testimonials from real patients, hard-hitting copy, and lab case studies worked together to encourage facilities to add more sensitive GBS screening to their practices.

References:
1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2025, May 20). Group B Strep Surveillance and Trends. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/group-b-strep/php/surveillance/index.html 2. Stoll BJ, Hansen NI, Sanchez PJ, et al. 2011. Early onset neonatal sepsis: the burden of group B streptococcal and E. coli disease continues.Pediatrics 127:817– 826. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2010-2217. 3. Shin JH and Pride DT. Comparison of Three Nucleic Acid Amplification Tests (NAATs) and Culture for Detection of Group B Streptococcus (GBS) from Enrichment Broth. J Clin Microbiol JCM.01958-18; DOI: 10.1128/JCM.01958-18.

The Lead Coalition

The Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning (CPLP) is an education and advocacy organization in Rochester dedicated to eliminating childhood lead poisoning and other environmental home health hazards. Their single most important message? Lead poisoning is a real risk in Rochester, and the only way to know for sure if your child has lead is with a blood test.

Our team created a billboard, bus shelter ad, and social video to be used across platforms, raising awareness of the issue and encouraging caregivers to get kids tested. Rather than use fear-based language and jarring, red and black colors, we leaned into bright visuals and optimistic, empowering messaging. Together, we can end child lead poisoning in Monroe County—and these concepts helped us all get there.

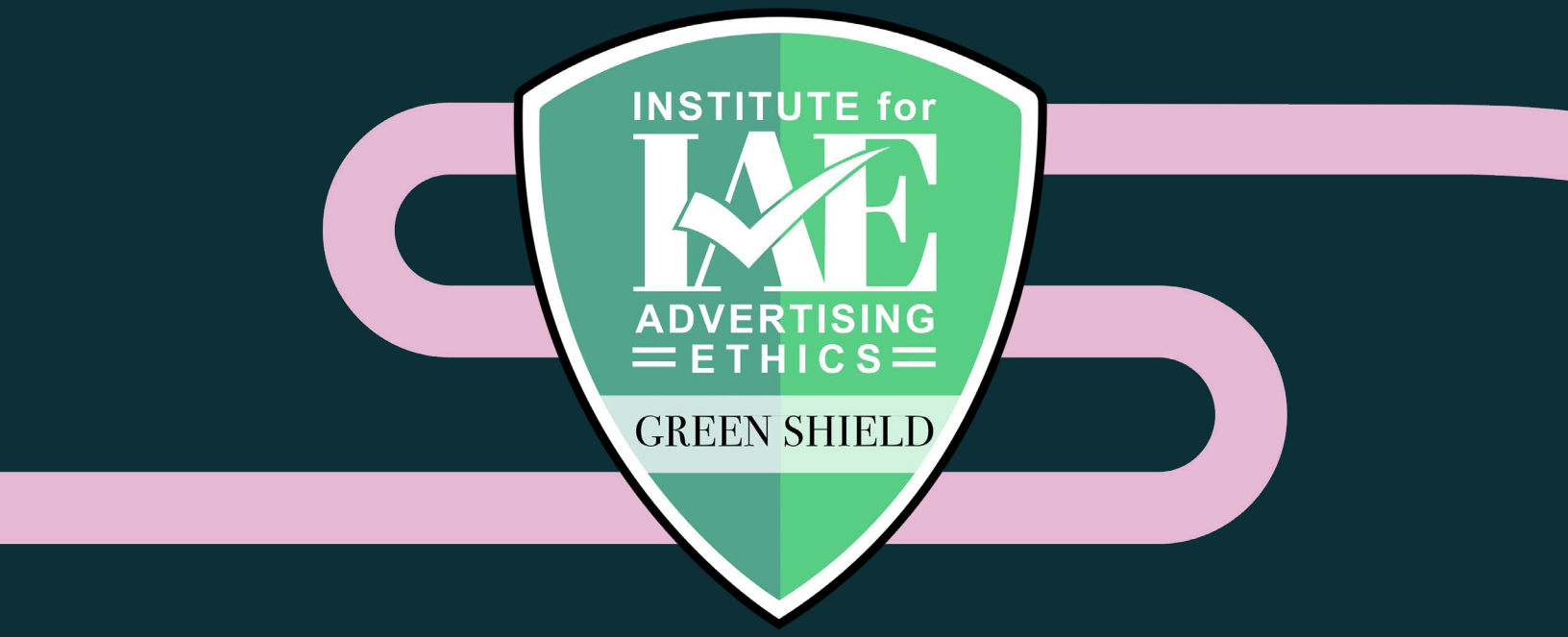
Business Ethics

Business Ethics

We're Anti-Greenwash Certified!

We've all seen it before: the leaf-covered label slapped onto toxic cleaning supplies or a vague "eco-friendly" buzzword. In an era where sustainability sells, it's become all too easy for brands to overstate or oversimplify their environmental efforts. The result? Greenwashing: when messaging implies a level of environmental responsibility that doesn't match reality. As digital marketers, we recognize that we do have a responsibility to educate ourselves and others about the impact these misleading tactics can have on consumers and the environment.

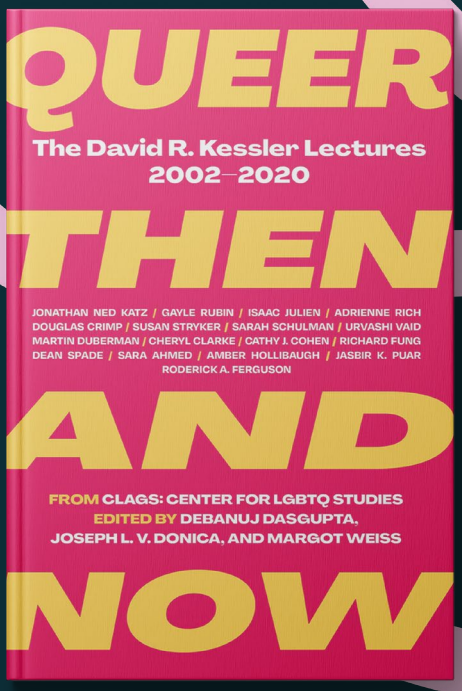
While most organizations aren't deliberately trying to deceive, well-intentioned campaigns can still mislead when they prioritize perception over authenticity. And in today's climate (pun intended), that kind of disconnect doesn't go unnoticed. Consumers (especially Gen Z and Millennials) are increasingly values-driven. They expect brands to not only "talk the talk" but back it up with real, measurable action. This year we took initiative and completed a course from IAE (Institute for Advertising Ethics) Green Shield, a training program developed to combat greenwashing in the advertising industry. We were introduced to tools to help educate ourselves, partners, and clients on ways to improve the integrity of our sustainability efforts.



Business Ethics

Queer Then and Now Book Club

In 2025, 18 coworkers joined our "Queer Then and Now Book Club," where we read a chapter a month about queer theory from the historic David R. Kessler lecture series. Here are some thoughts from our book club members:



"I think the book club has been a great example of providing a space for actually challenging discussion and an openness for difficult questions to encourage change in a workplace environment. I'm usually very underwhelmed by most initiatives that claim to do things like this because they end up very sanitized, but this has been a space for conversations for both queer and nonqueer people to engage with subject matter in an authentic way free of judgment."

Noah Kay
Sr. New Media Designer

"It's been great to hear my coworkers' personal perspectives and read essays from such a diverse group of authors. Our discussions have definitely led me to think more intentionally about queer spaces, current policies, how the LGBT community overlaps with feminism and racial justice movements, and more. Plus, I always love a book club in any form :)"

Sammy Boyd
Copywriter

"I have been so impressed with everyone and how focused and prepared people have been when engaging with the content. It's not 101, and that can be intimidating, but everyone has shown up ready to discuss complex issues with open minds and really excellent questions. I think it shows what can happen when you intentionally create a safe space for learning and growth!"

Séamus Spencer
Creative Team Lead, Design

"Having discussions around the book has deepened its impact on me tenfold. I get to see the same text from a myriad of perspectives that are present in our company, which enhances my understanding and processing of each chapter. I also get to talk out the feelings that come up for me when being challenged on what I think I know about the Queer experience and allyship. It has been a deeply human space that pushes the boundaries of what psychological safety actually looks like in the workplace."

Amy Sadler
Creative Team Lead, Production

"For me, one of the key feelings I felt with the book club was observing the vast amount of ideas and opinions from a shared value. Very vague, I know, but a lot of information I see online starts to feel like "I'm telling you how you should think about this" - and can feel very click baity/hostile - instead of opening conversations, explaining multiple points of views, and allowing safe space for people to speak openly. I didn't think I'd speak up much when I joined, but (whenever I was able to make a meeting) I was able to contribute a bit."

Molly Leo
New Media Designer

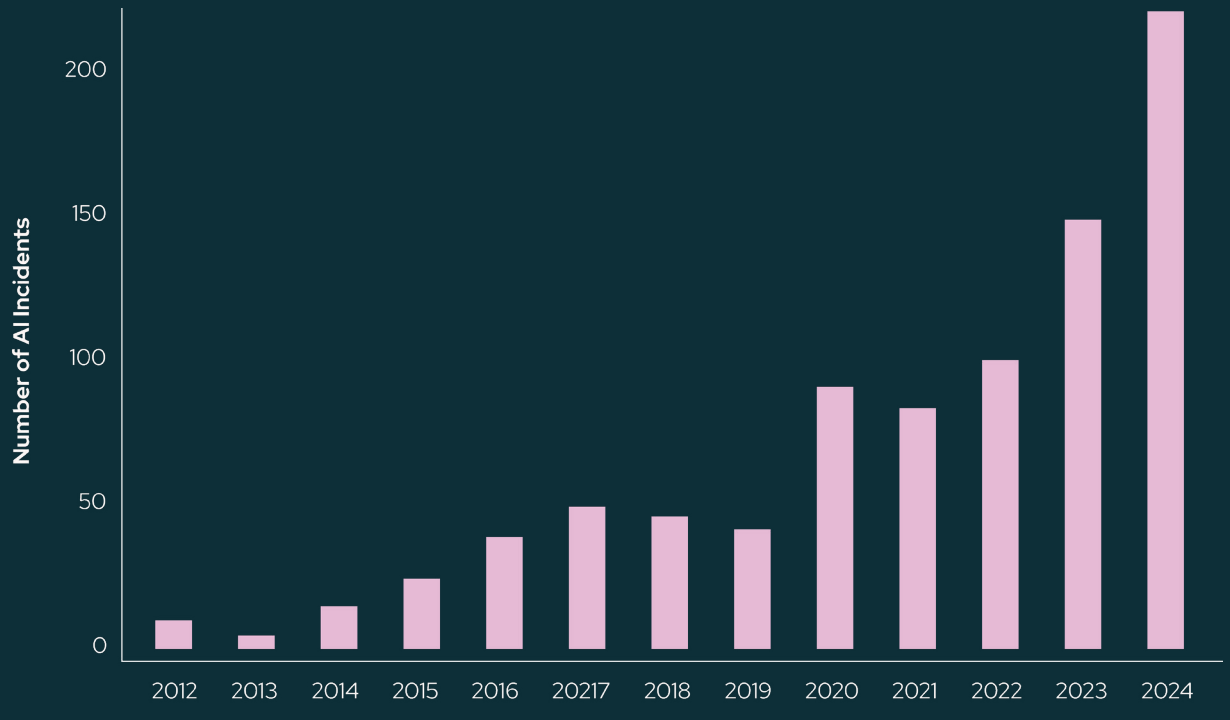
Leadership AI Alignment

In early 2025, the Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HAI) released their state of AI index report. It offers valuable information on how we build our businesses and brands. The analysis confirms what we're experiencing, AI is rapidly becoming more accessible and embedded in everyday business operations.

But, the speed at which AI is advancing still leaves a lot to be desired in terms of safety. The tension between innovation and responsibility continues, and taking meaningful action hasn't taken priority the way it should, even as we begin 2026.

This is a conversation we're having daily at Helen + Gertrude. Creativity and adaptability are literally our company values, but so are compassion and accountability. We must constantly check ourselves on the reality of this innovation and how it aligns with our business.

As we integrate these tools (yes, tools, not human replacement), how do we balance performance with the invisible costs to humanity?



Building an Inclusive Culture, The Ultimate Group Project

Our company theme for the year was "Level up", focused on elevating our skillsets and the work we do for our clients. To do so, one of our initiatives was to bring in more outside perspectives to continue to establish what inclusion looks like in our company culture and our work. In 2025, we brought in Karima Miller as an external partner to grow our DEIA initiatives. Karima performed a full audit of our previous trainings and policies, met with Helen + Gertrude leadership on a bi-weekly basis, and held employee surveys and listening sessions to identify key areas for Helen + Gertrude to focus on.

Those trainings included:

Purposely Inclusive: Foundations of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: We kicked off our sessions with Karima Miller of Create in Purpose, for a diversity, equity, and inclusion-centered training, built for the Helen + Gertrude team to reflect and align their values with their everyday work and operations. This all-company training explored what it means to build a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization, starting with supporting ourselves and extending to team dynamics, client relationships, and the work we produce every day.

Inclusive Team Norms Workshop: In this next session, Karima guided us through a collaborative session on team norms, work that will continue to evolve into 2026 and beyond. This workshop continued to lay the inclusion foundation by tasking our teams to co-create team norms that reflect our shared values and foster a more inclusive work environment. Karima guided us through the VOICE framework as a tool for navigating moments of harm, microaggressions, and communication challenges.

Leading in Purpose: Awareness, Action & Accountability: Upon completing our inclusion audit, Karima Miler returned for another workshop focused on our management team and how we lead, connect, and support our teams and one another, through self-awareness, purposeful action, and accountability. Together, we explored what inclusive and restorative leadership looks like in practice by building trust, fostering agency, addressing harm with empathy, and supporting a deeper sense of safety, connection, and inclusion across teams.

Helen + Gertrude

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Goals and Measurement

In Our Project Management Era

We were drowning in the logistics of our own good work.

Good work was happening. Clients were happy. But the weight of keeping the machine running was spread across everyone doing the work—account managers tracking capacity across five projects, team leads estimating timelines between deliverables, strategists keeping one eye on what was promised and another on what was possible.
Everyone was carrying a piece of the operational puzzle, which meant nobody could focus entirely on what they were hired to do.

This year, we brought on a consultant to audit our process and rolled out a new project management function to estimate timelines, manage team capacity, and holding the consequences.

The difference was immediate.

When one team owns whether an estimate is real—whether it accounts for unknowns, for the way Thursday afternoon is different from Tuesday morning—they estimate differently. They build in what's actually true, not what's hoped for. Estimates tightened. Pricing aligned with what the work costs. But more than that, the person doing the estimating sees the math clearly. Sees where the risk is. Sees when something doesn't fit.

The bigger shift was internal.

Account managers stopped tracking timelines and capacity. They could think about what the client needs next, how to support their business goals. Strategists could go deep on strategy. Designers could iterate without glancing over their shoulder. Copywriters could focus on the right word choice. Nobody's attention was split between the work and the logistics of the work.

Workloads balanced. People had space to think. The work got sharper. Recommendations got deeper. We didn't add this function because things were falling apart. We added it because good work deserves full attention, and we were dividing ours. Now everyone is focused on what they do best—and that's what clients actually notice.

Celebrating Our Wins

While we're proud of the work we do and the culture we've created, it's extra special when others recognize our impact, too. We received **8 accolades last year**, split 50/50 between both client success stories and Helen + Gertrude's business impact.

These included outstanding partnership results:

The Telly Awards

Honoring excellence in video and television across all screens.

- The Child Advocacy Center of Rochester

Digiday Greater Good Awards

Showcasing the work being done around social causes, their impact.

2 Communicator Awards

Honoring excellence, effectiveness, and innovation across all areas of communication.

- Hologic® 3D Mammography
- The Child Advocacy Center of Rochester

Agency recognitions:

- Best Women-Owned Business
- A Leading MWBE (Minority and Women Business Enterprise)

& Celebration of our Founder + CEO, Becca

- Top Inclusive Leader, Finalist
- Rochester Business Person of the Year, Finalist

Lattice Implementation

We have always been proud to have a feedback culture. Twice a year, we conduct 360 performance reviews, which include a manager review, self-review, and multiple peer reviews, including team members outside of your discipline. The constructive feedback was great, but our tools left something to be desired. In 2025, we researched, demoed, and ultimately selected a performance management system that got us out of Google Forms and Spreadsheets, a critical part of our "Level Up" company goals. We selected Lattice as our platform of choice. The new system not only allowed us to have a more user-friendly performance review, but it also allowed team members to leave real-time feedback, document 1:1 manager conversations, detail their goals, and connect them back to their review conversations. No longer were reviews focused on just what could be remembered in that moment of time, but team members get a more accurate snapshot of the full 6 months since their last review.

Moving Forward Together:

What's Ahead in 2026

2025 asked a lot of us. What we learned about ourselves in the process is informing how we move into 2026. This is a year of precision. After a period of significant change, we're focused on sharpening the things that make Helen + Gertrude exceptional. That continues to be how our integrated teams speak the same language and seamlessly pull each other in at the right moment, the rigor behind our strategy, our attention to making our work more inclusive, the quality of our client experience, and the systems that let our team do their best work without burning out.

AI is the defining challenge of our industry right now. You can't be a human on the internet without being affected by AI. We continue to approach it with curiosity, caution, and a clear set of values. We will continue to adapt and pivot; the tools may change, but our people will continue to be at the helm.

The best work of Helen + Gertrude is still ahead, and if you're looking for an agency that's as invested in your success as you are, we'd love to do it together.

Helen + Gertrude

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