The advent of web based electronic commerce has created numerous opportunities for marketing professionals to enhance current marketing practices by integrating the interactive nature of the web with database marketing. The challenge for IT professionals is to align IT with web site strategy in order to utilise the potential of the database marketing to enhance interaction and personalised communication with the customer. Three direct marketing firms were investigated to provide real insights into the integration of database marketing with the Internet and to compare current knowledge with practice.

Keywords: Web marketing strategies, web technologies, Database marketing, Strategic alignment on the web, Personalisation, Interactivity

INTRODUCTION
The Internet has made a remarkable impact within its first decade of commercial use. Marketing professionals have been quick to recognise the opportunities offered by the Internet. In particular they realised that business could be enhanced by integrating the Internet with direct marketing practices such as database marketing. The challenge for information systems professionals and practitioners is to realise these opportunities with the available technologies within the contextual constraints of an organisation.

This paper focuses on the IT issues facing practitioners integrating database/web marketing strategies with the Internet. For many organisations, the web is a relatively new medium which is still not fully understood and utilised as a marketing channel. A review of current knowledge included an investigation of web site strategies and the personalisation and interactivity possible with supporting web technologies. This paper reports on three direct marketing firms that have integrated database marketing practices with their web sites.