

Managing (and coping with) the Ecosystem

Loïc Damilaville
Assistant CEO, VP strategy

Summary

- « Fundamentals » of AFNIC's Ecosystem

- « Main Picture »
- Legal Framework
- Domain name market in France
- (R)evolution brought by new TLDs

- Dealing with the Ecosystem

- Relations with government authorities
- Relations with registrars
- Relations with brand owners
- Relations with civil society / users

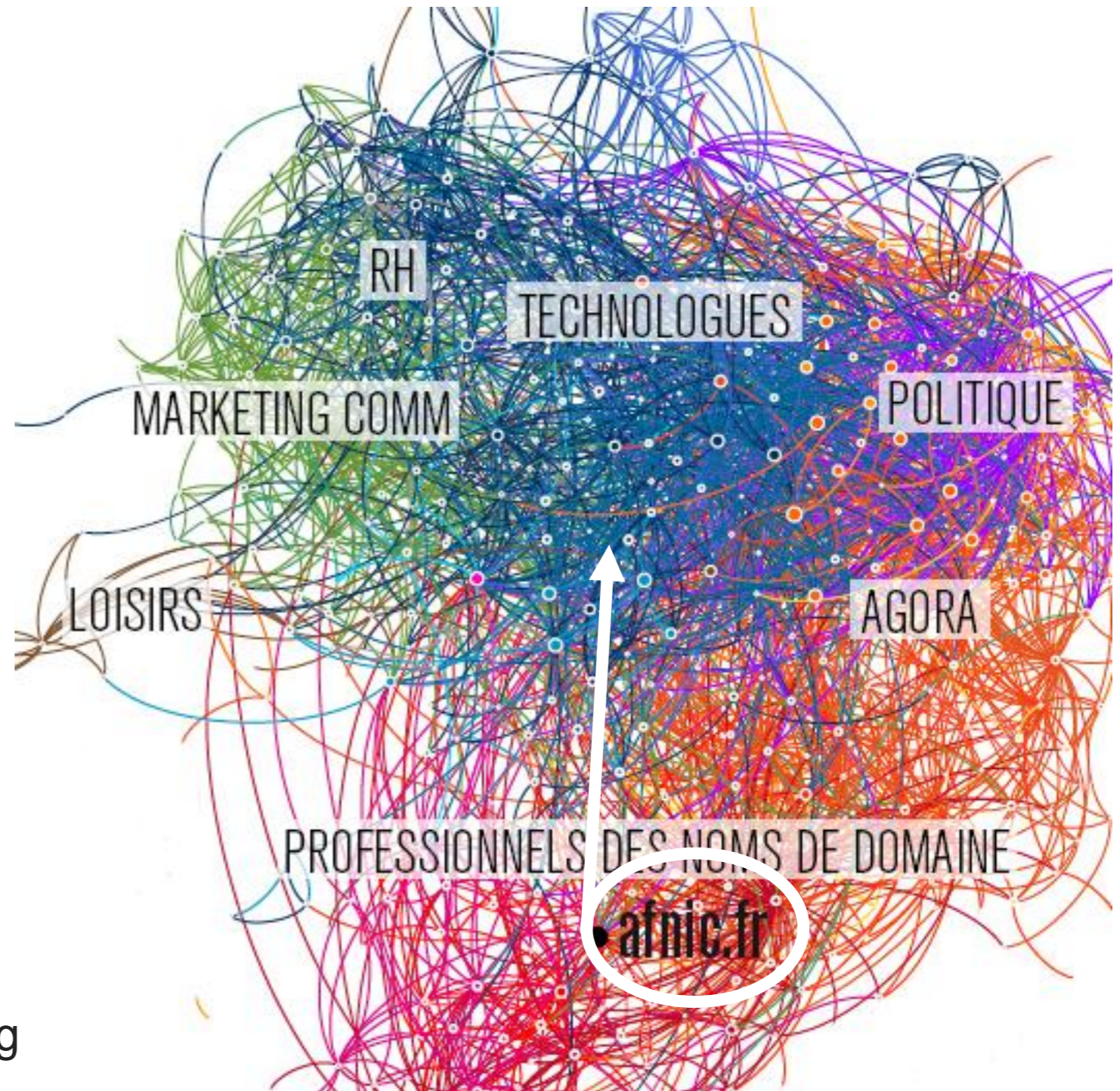
Fundamentals of AFNIC's Ecosystem

Main Picture (1)

- Map of AFNIC's relations with the french internet community through its internet presence
 - Links between websites
 - Social analysis of the results
- Communities identified
 - **Domain names professionals:** registrars, domainers, specialized media...
 - « **Agora** »: civil society, media, lawyers/brand owners/IP professionals
 - **Technologists** : media and experts of internet technical issues
 - **Marketers:** SEO experts, marketing & communication professionals
 - **Others:** politics, leisures & games, human ressources

Main Picture (2)

- AFNIC is right in the center of the domain names professionals community
- However, it needs to strengthen its links with the other communities
 - Make them aware of domain names issues
 - Promote itself as a center of expertise on these issues
 - Help people understand how they could benefit from domain names (and especially .FR)
 - Endeavour to be closer to Agora, Technologists, Marketing Comm & Politics



Legal framework (1)

- Not-for-profit association created in 1998 with the intent of being neutral, non discriminatory and open to every members of the french internet community (government, registrars and users)
- Designated by the government authorities as « Office d'enregistrement » of .FR in March, 2010
- Manages also .RE (Reunion Island), .WF (Wallis & Futuna Islands), .TF (Antarctic French Territories), .PM (Saint-Pierre et Miquelon), .YT (Mayotte Island)
- Other french TLDs not managed by AFNIC: .GP (Guadeloupe), .MQ (Martinique), .GF (French Guyana), .PF (French Polynesia), .NC (New Caledonia)

Legal framework (2)

- **According to the Law, the Office d'enregistrement:**

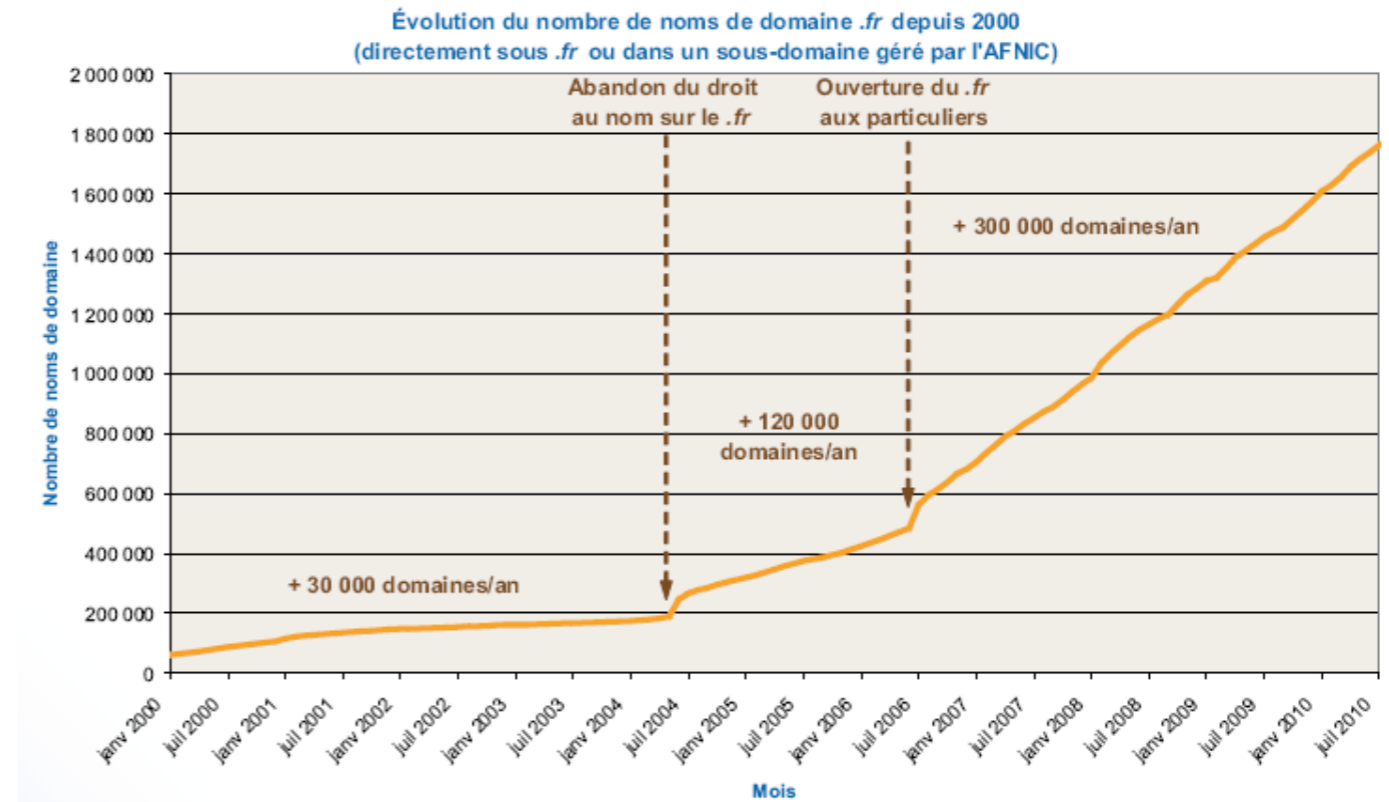
- Is designated by the French Ministry for Electronic communications
- Sets the registration policies with respect to the Law: non discriminatory, transparent, ensuring respect for freedom of communication, freedom of enterprise and intellectual property rights
- Registered domain names must not infringe Morals or Public Order, legal rights of third parties, or public institutions rights unless the applicant provides proof of a legitimate interest and is acting in good faith
- Is responsible for the registration of domain names and the day-to-day management of the TLD
- FR will be open to legal persons and individuals established or living in the European Union (12/11)

Legal framework (3)

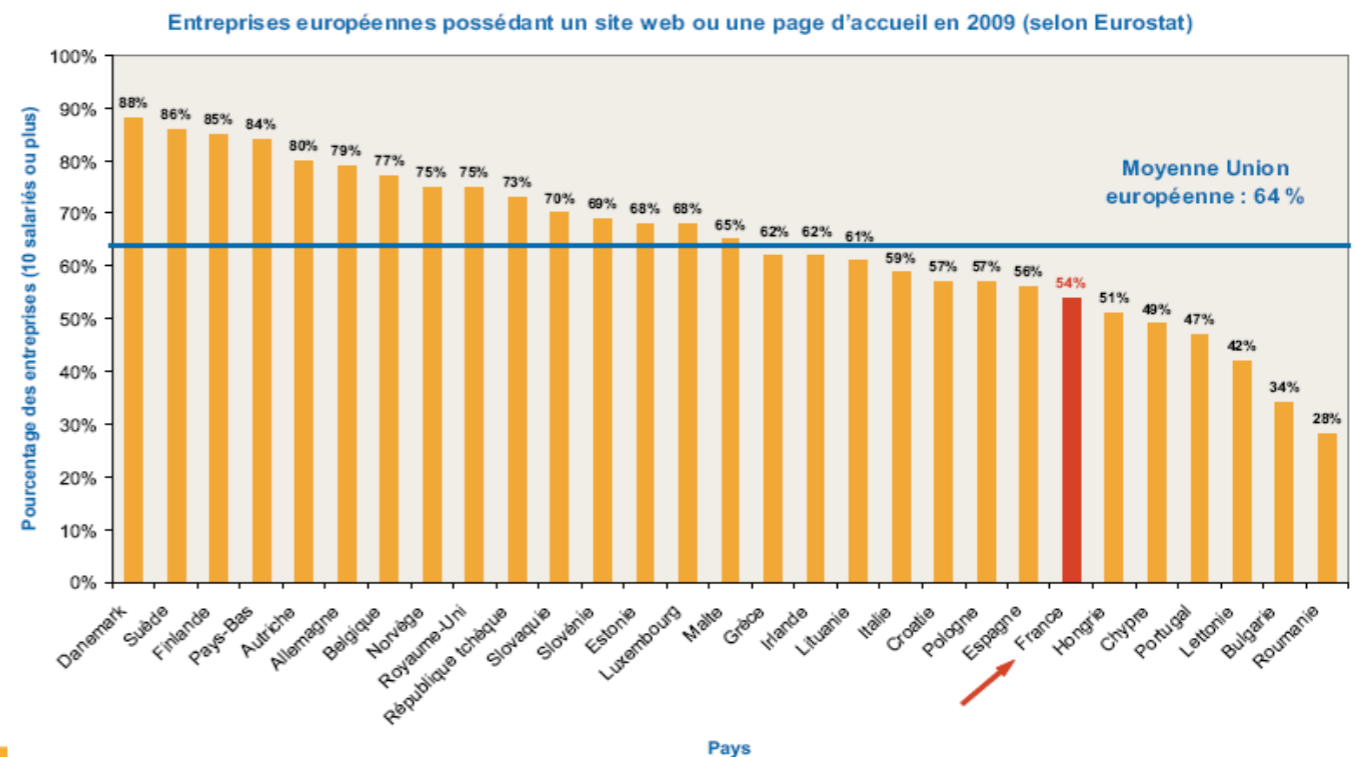
- **According to the Law, the Office d'enregistrement:**
 - Publishes on a daily basis the list of all registered domain names under its TLD
 - Accredits the registrars and publishes the list of the accredited registrars
 - Collects the data necessary to identify the registrant whether it is a legal person or an individual; false or incorrect data may lead to domain name deletion
 - In some cases, checks the legitimacy of registration requests
 - May suspend or delete any domain name infringing Morals or Public Order
 - Deals with disputes and decides whether domain names must be transferred or deleted

Domain Market in France (1)

- A steadily growing market...

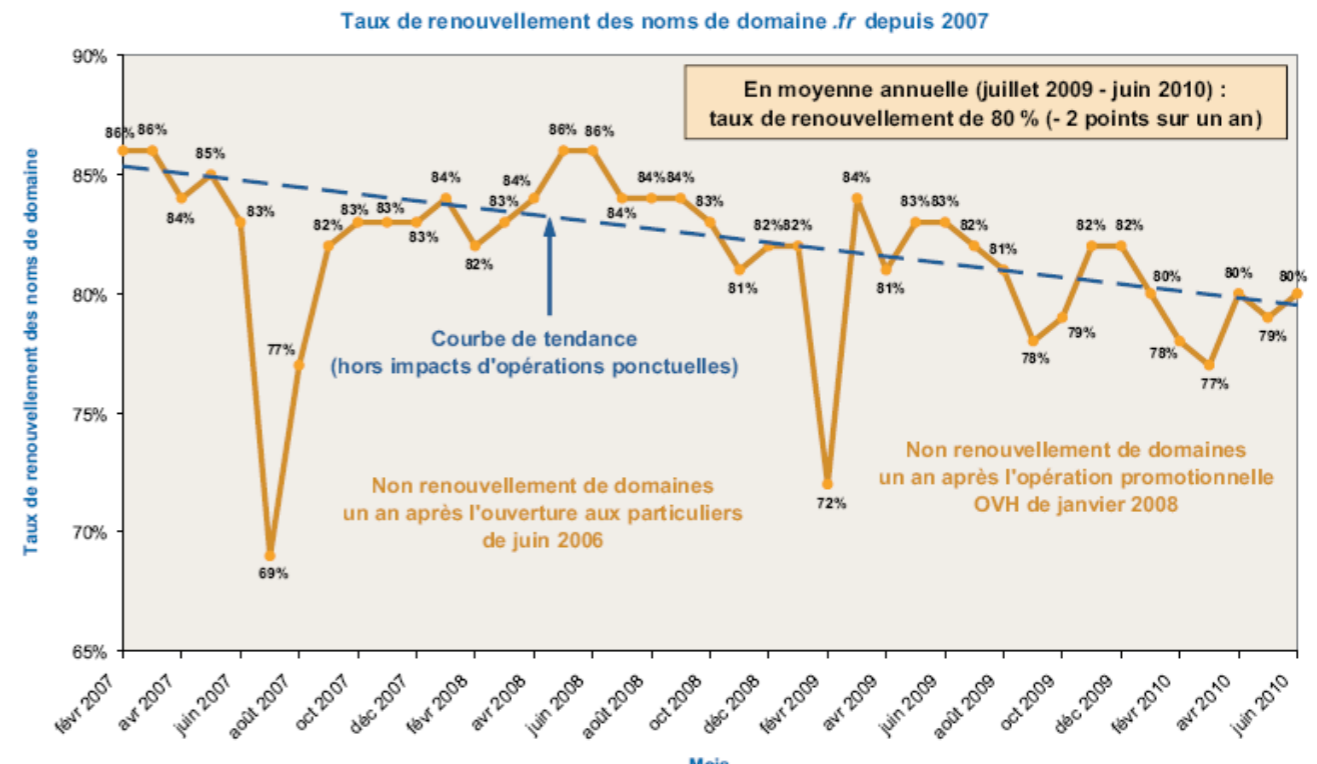


- ... although still underdeveloped

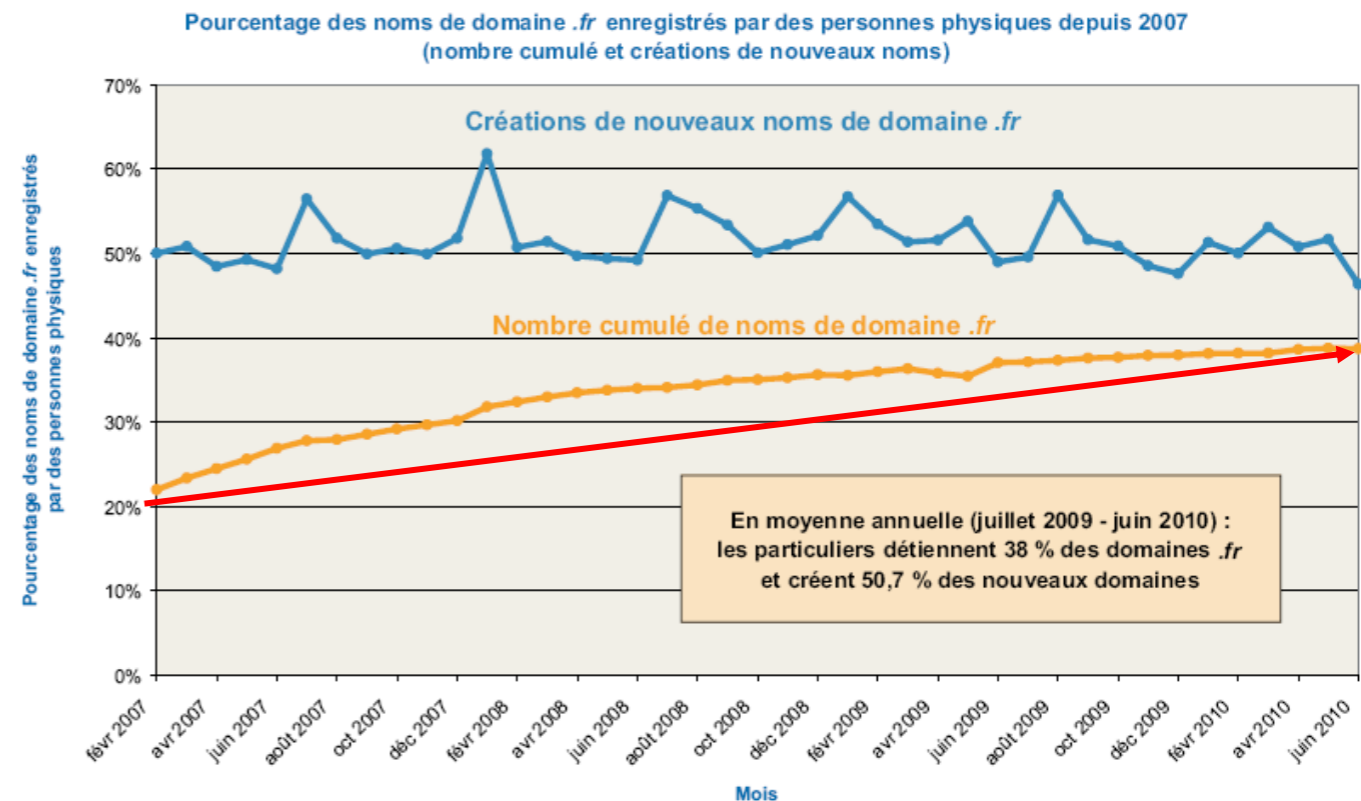


Domain Market in France (2)

- FR enjoys a strong renewal rate, which slowly decreases...



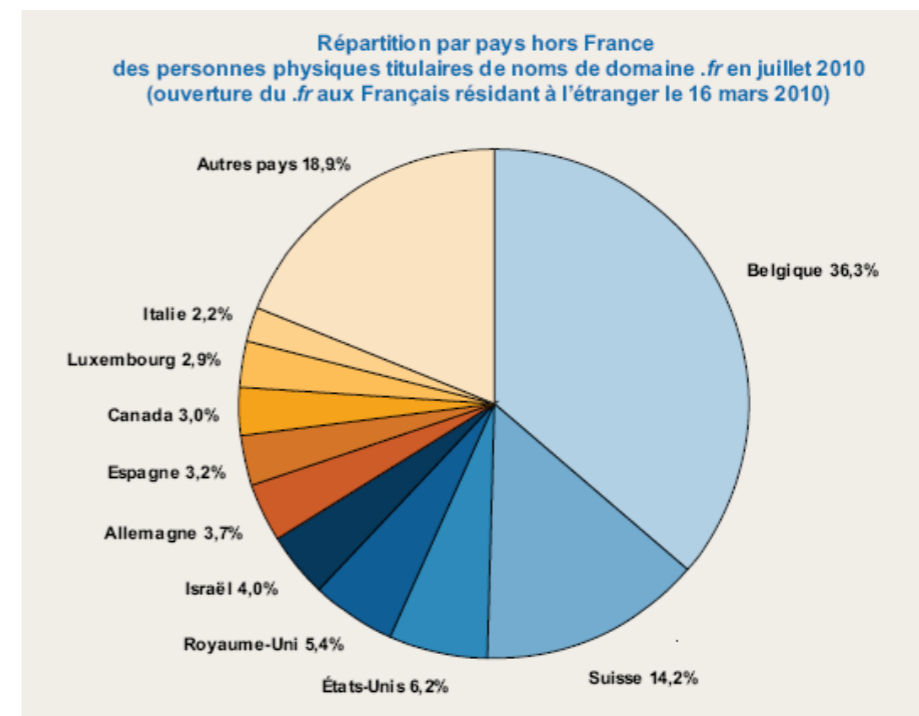
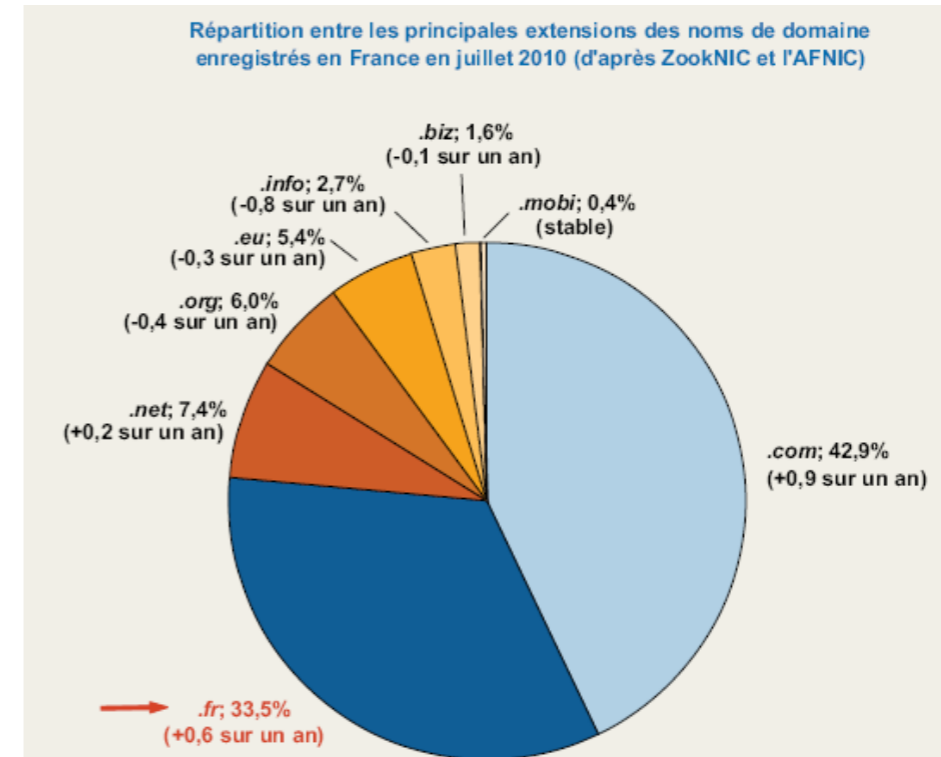
- ... because of the growing percentage of individuals among registrants



Domain Market in France (3)

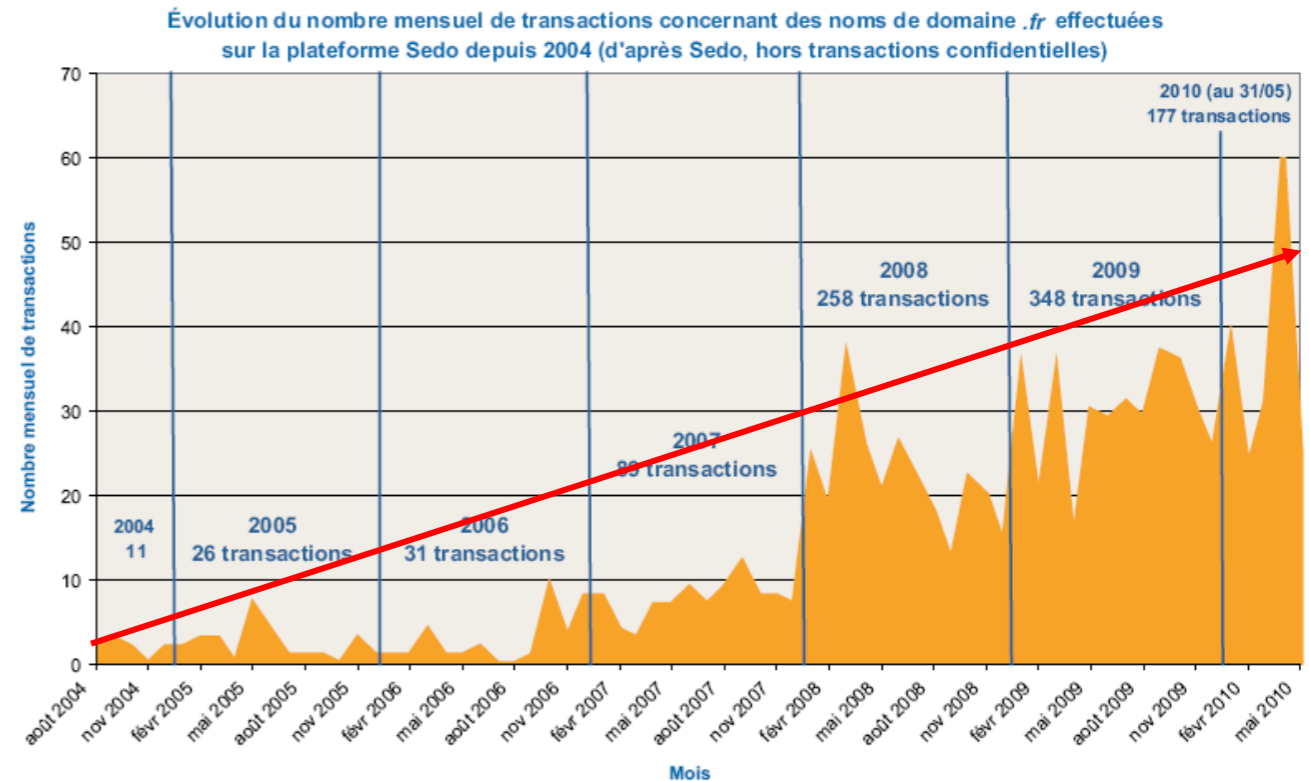
- FR market share may still improve against .COM...

- ... whereas the TLD is preparing for its opening to UE

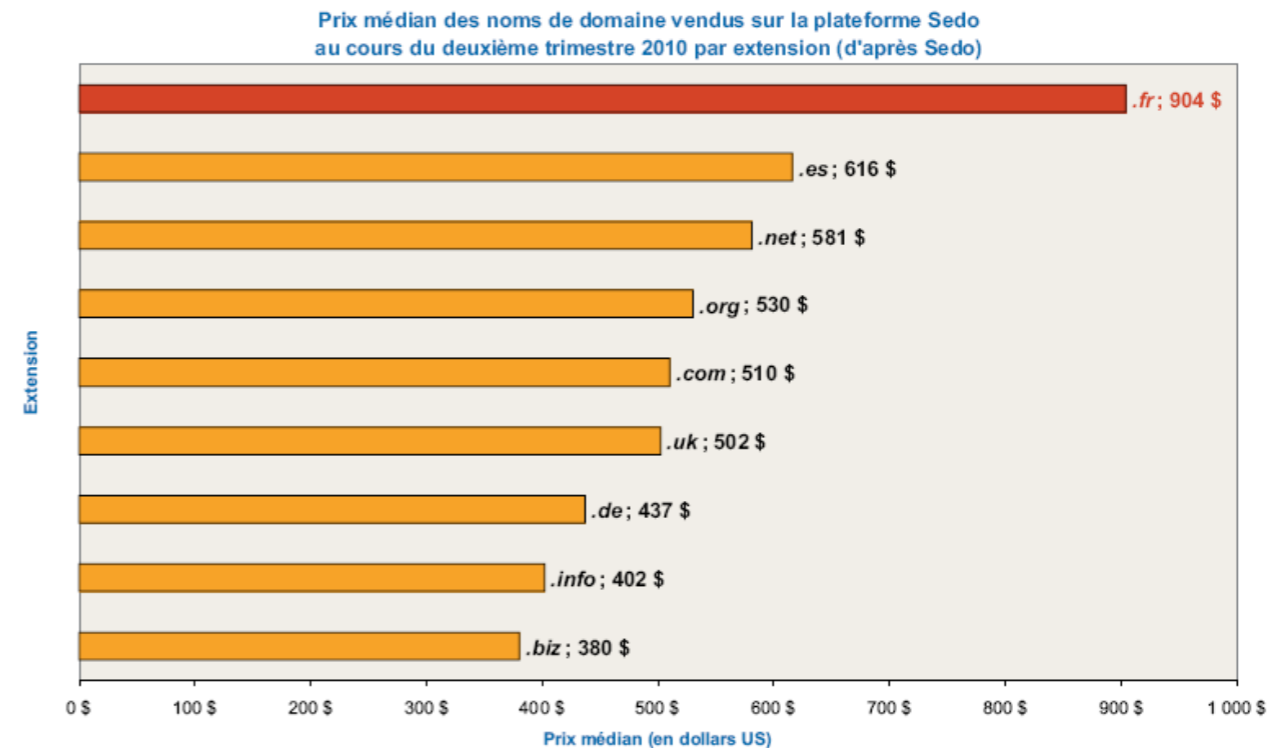


Domain Market in France (4)

- Secondary market is increasing significantly...



- ... and shows the value of .FR for domainers



(R)Evolution brought by new TLDs

- **Some personal feelings about it**

- Registries are not really competitors among themselves, even gTLDs vs ccTLDs
- When .EU was created in 2006, some people feared that it would be a significant competitor for .FR - 5 years later, its market share is limited to 5% and other gTLDs do not do better (.COM excluded)
- In the long term, there will be more competition between the TLDs users will [really] need, but in the short term, there will be more confusion and more awareness
- More confusion AND more awareness benefit to traditional TLDs since they are familiar to people: .COM and national ccTLDs

(R)Evolution brought by new TLDs

- **Some personal feelings about it**

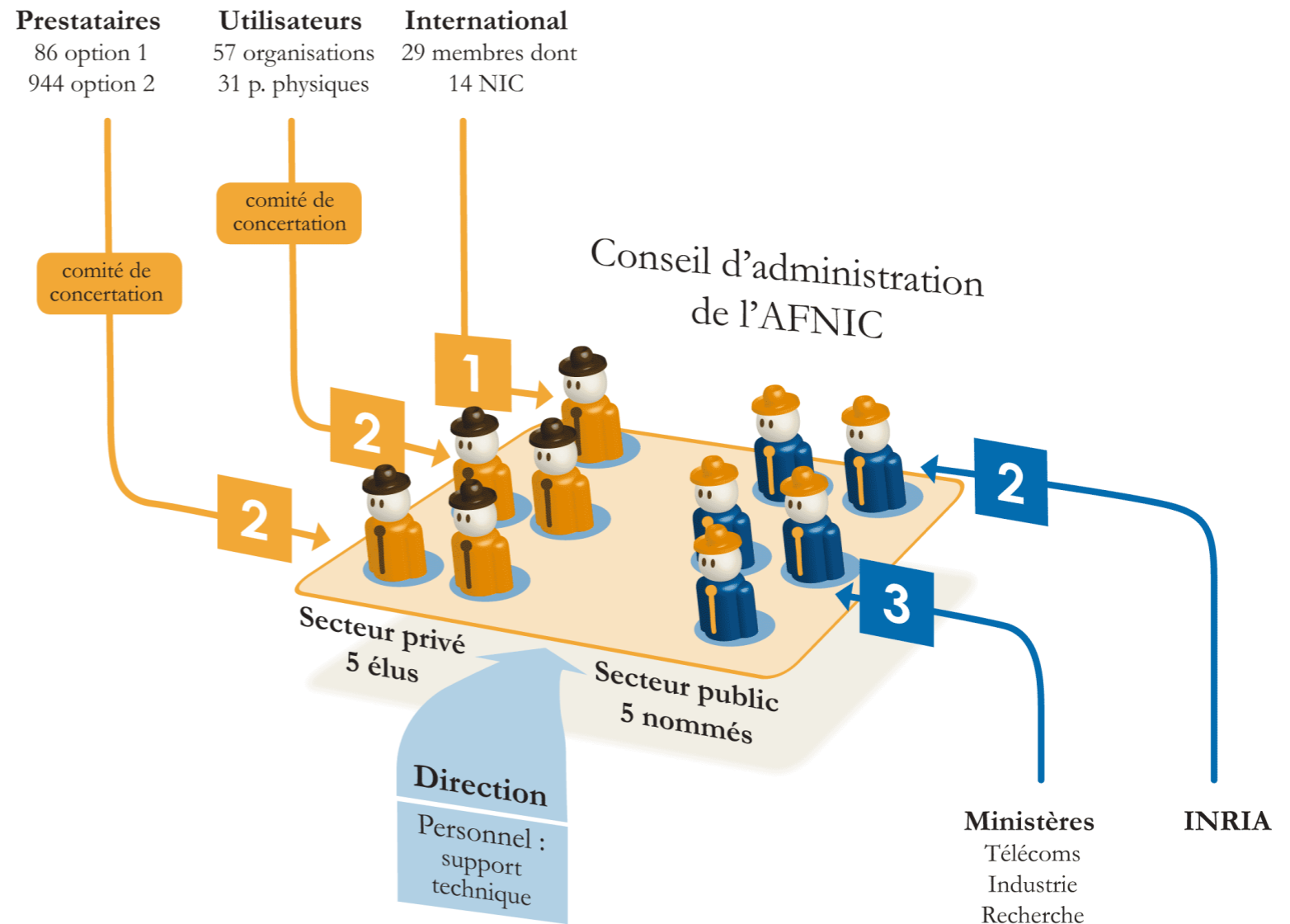
- ccTLDs enjoy a geographical and national meaning: they are associated with a country, a language, a domestic market
- FR marketing baseline is strong and able to cope with that: « to speak in french to french people »
- The good news is that more TLDs lead to more sophisticated naming strategies: this will not be .SPORT OR .FR but .SPORT AND .FR
- The actual (r)evolution is not for registries but for users: they will have to think about what they must register in order to optimize their internet presence and identity
- The choice will not be on domain names they need but on defensive registrations
- Registries and registrars may strongly help in that process

Dealing with the Ecosystem

Dealing with government authorities

- **An inclusive model of governance**

- AFNIC's Board counts 10 members
- 5 are appointed by government, AFNIC's chairman being chosen among them
- 2 are elected by registrars
- 2 are elected by representatives of users
- 1 is elected by members of AFNIC's International College (its chairman)



Dealing with government authorities

- **Strong links, but a real autonomy on day-to-day management**
 - AFNIC has been created by government authorities in 1998
 - Our main « partner » is the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry
 - Appointment as Office d'enregistrement in March, 2010
 - Government is the sole owner of FR's database
 - AFNIC's main objectives and orientations are discussed with members of the Board, among them government representatives
 - AFNIC has also built some ties with Parliament Members in order to raise awareness about internet governance and domain names issues

Dealing with government authorities

- **French government wants to ensure confidence in an open and free internet through 5 strategic axis:**
 - Deploy high broadband networks
 - Fight against every digital fractures
 - Ensure neutrality of networks and contents access
 - Protect personal life and data – opt-in must prevail
 - Promote a multi-stakeholders internet governance

Dealing with government authorities

- **AFNIC's main commitments as regards its current contract as Office d'enregistrement:**
 - 10% of turnover must be dedicated to promote .FR
 - 30% of the former year's benefits must be dedicated to innovation and internet development
 - More than 5% of turnover must be dedicated to ensure .FR's security
 - More than 3% of the wages expenses must be dedicated to training AFNIC's people
 - SLAs and other technical commitments are also included

Dealing with registrars

- Working together to develop .FR, on a non-discriminatory basis
 - Registrars were not accredited until 2011, but the new law on french TLDs management commends the Office d'enregistrement to accredit its registrars before December 31st, 2011
 - AFNIC is working closely with registrars for operational matters. A dedicated website is published <http://operations.afnic.fr/en> for this purpose
 - AFNIC is also engaged in marketing actions with registrars wanting to promote .FR

Dealing with registrars

- Working together to develop .FR, on a non-discriminatory basis
 - AFNIC's extranet website provides for instance a « cockpit » service, which aims to give registrars lots of marketing informations about their domain names and commercial achievements
 - Three working groups have been created since 2006: Technical WG, Legal WG, Marketing & Communication WG. 2-3 meetings per year
 - Consultation committees bring members together twice a year in order to discuss about current issues and prepare the Board meetings
 - Registrars have 2 representatives on AFNIC's board

Dealing with brand owners

• Developing .FR with respect of IP rights

- AFNIC has been involved in IP rights protection from its own birth
- Registration policies have changed in 2004 and 2006 (opening to individuals) towards more openness, but AFNIC has ensured that brand owners be able to claim domain names registered in bad faith
- Until 15th May 2011, a right holder could use the PREDEC procedure in obvious cases, or request WIPO in an UDRP-like manner
- Before the end of 2011, AFNIC will set up new dispute policies abiding to the new Law

Dealing with civil society / users

- **Developping .FR for the benefits of the common users**
 - Users are represented by 2 members of AFNIC's Board
 - Individuals can become members of AFNIC
 - Growing efforts are made to build links with the community through social media: Facebook and Twitter for instance
 - Users are often « final customers » (our registrars clients) and AFNIC's main priorities are less to « sell » than :
 - To make them aware of the benefits of domain names
 - To convince them that they need .FR « to speak in french to french people »
 - To help them if they have problems with their registrar on .FR domain names

Thank you !

Loic.damilaville@afnic.fr