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Research Firm Reports Decline in Academy Award Ad Spending

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Advertising spending during the Academy Awards fell by 10 percent this year, even though ABC sold two more minutes of commercials. ABC sold 26 minutes of ad time in this Oscars broadcast, compared with 24 minutes last year, according to TNS Media. But the price of a spot dropped.

While ABC does not publicize its advertising rates, TNS estimated they dropped to \$1.4 million, from \$1.69 million last year, for a 30-second commercial.

“There’s essentially a supply and demand issue,” said Dean DeBiase, the chief executive of TNS Media, who noted that both General Motors and L’Oreal pulled out of the Oscars this year. “It lent itself to buying opportunities for certain advertisers.”

Hyundai was one of those: the brand-new Oscars advertiser had eight commercials, including the ad that retained the highest percentage of viewers, said TNS, which analyzed households’ remote-control data for its findings. Hyundai has been promoting a recession-wise offer to let buyers return cars if they lose their jobs or incomes within a year. A Sprint Nextel commercial retained the lowest percentage of viewers, according to TNS.

Though the Academy allowed movie studios to run commercials for the first time, its restrictions on what could run ended up in only two commercials. “Next year you’ll see a lot more movies being advertised, because they’ve finally realized this is the audience that has the biggest bang for the buck in terms of movies that are coming up,” Mr. DeBiase said.