

NBC says negative Olympic stories helped ad sales

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A couple walks along Copacabana beach ahead of the upcoming 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Thursday, Aug. 4, 2016. The iconic Copacabana beach will be the starting point for the road cycling race, marathon swimming and triathlon competitions during the Olympics. (AP Photo/David Goldman)

NBC executives say that pre-Olympics media reports about the Zika virus, polluted water and political unrest in Brazil helped the network's

advertising sales.

NBC Sports advertising head Seth Winters said Thursday that the stories helped increase awareness of the event. He said NBC has already sold \$1.2 billion in national advertising time, about 20 percent above the London Games of 2012 at the same point. NBC paid \$1.2 billion for the broadcasting rights, and has said it expects to make a profit.

The London Olympics were a huge success for NBC, which averaged 31.1 million viewers across two weeks of prime-time.

Winter says he expects viewers will see some political advertising during the games, but he wouldn't specify which campaigns have bought time.

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