# Optimizing the Chili's dining experience

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Back in the days of Windows 95, one of my colleagues paid a visit to his counterparts over in the Windows NT team as part of a continuing informal engagement to keep the Windows NT developers aware of the crazy stuff we've been doing on the Windows 95 side.

One particular time, his visit occurred in late morning, and it ran longer than usual, so the Windows NT folks said, "Hey, it's lunchtime. Do you want to join us for lunch? It's sort of our tradition to go to Chili's for lunch on Thursdays."

My colleague cheerfully accepted their offer.

The group were shown to their table, and the Windows NT folks didn't even look at the menus. After all, they've been here every week for who-knows-how-long, so they know the menu inside-out.

When the server came to take the orders, they naturally let my colleague order first, seeing as he was their special guest.

"I'll have a chicken ranch sandwich."

The folks from the Windows NT team then placed their orders.

"I'll have the turkey sandwich."

"Turkey sandwich."

"A turkey sandwich for me, please."

Every single person ordered a turkey sandwich.

After the server left, my colleague asked, "Why do you all order the turkey sandwich?"

They explained, "We've been coming here for a long time, and we eventually figured out that, at least at this restaurant, the turkey sandwich takes the least time to prepare."

What my colleague forgot to ask was, "Well, since I already ordered something else, I naturally screwed up your highly-optimized algorithm. So why didn't you order something else?"

**Note**: I actually don't know who ordered first. I just made up that part of the story to make it funnier. (Note that I make up parts of other stories, too. I'm not a historian. I'm a storyteller.)

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