

# The historical significance of the Burgermaster drive-in restaurant

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From 1981 to 1986, Microsoft was headquartered at what was then known as the Northup Building, 10700 Northup Way in Bellevue. A long time ago, [I told a story about the La Quinta Inn next to that building](#). The building on the other side also plays a significant role in the history of Microsoft. That building is the Burgermaster restaurant.

In Windows 3.0, the data segment that recorded the locations of all the other data segments was named the BurgerMaster.<sup>1</sup> Why?

According to one story, the developer couldn't think of a good name, so he looked out his window, saw the big sign that said *BURGERMASTER*, and decided to name it *BurgerMaster*.

Although the capitalization of the restaurant name is *Burgermaster*, the sign is printed in all-caps, and the developer erroneously capitalized it as *BurgerMaster* with a capital *M*.

Another story is that the segment is named *BurgerMaster* because it is the most important segment in Windows, just like how the Burgermaster restaurant is the most important restaurant for Windows developers.

The Burgermaster restaurant was so important that [Bill Gates's secretary kept it on speed dial](#). In fact, it wasn't just on speed dial for Bill Gates's secretary. It was a *company-wide* speed dial number. You could call them to order a burger, walk next door, and your order would be ready and waiting for you. This was a novelty back in the 1980s, though nowadays it sounds so old-fashioned to phone in a take-out order instead of using an app.

<sup>1</sup> At some point, it was given a much less whimsical name: The *global master handle*. But the comments in the code still call it the BurgerMaster.

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