



## Why not just Google it?

### **Accuracy.**

Not all information on the internet is based on fact. More and more, information may be slanted, or what you find may omit important details. The information professionals at your local library can point you to reliable sources on the web, as well as other references.

### **Reliability.**

Say you are seeking information to help make a decision on an investment, buying property or starting a business...do you want to rely on a search engine to dish up accurate and complete information for you to make a well-informed decision?

### **Local relevance.**

Libraries tend to collect information from local sources; what you find there is more likely to be relevant to you and your area. Geospatial data and images professionally managed by the Montana State Library are compiled from many reliable sources, including researchers, producers and government agencies at the local level.

### **Your selection, not the search engine's.**

Out of millions of possible results, a search engine will select which ones to show you first—based on sponsored ads, other promoted results, what device you are using, what you have looked at before and other things it knows about you. Google search results can vary widely. Your own choices, aided by an information professional, may be a lot more balanced, objective and able to be duplicated.

### **Specific detail.**

Planners need much more detail than Google provides. Library information services in Montana offer authoritative knowledge about Montana. The geographic datasets available through the Montana State Library provide highly detailed information about land, water, property, infrastructure and biodiversity in the state of Montana.

### **Montana sources.**

Structures in satellite images in Google Earth may be obscured by leaves on trees or other interference—depending on when the photo was taken. Aerial images in Montana's geographic information system come from many sources, including the Montana Department of Transportation and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

### **You may not know the right question.**

There are many methods of seeking information; using a search engine is just one of them. Information retrieval is a science that librarians study. Reference librarians know how to help people refine their search, and get to the right resource, even if they have only a vague idea of what they are looking for.

*Remember, without the public library, some people in your community would not have access to the internet and the opportunities it provides.*