

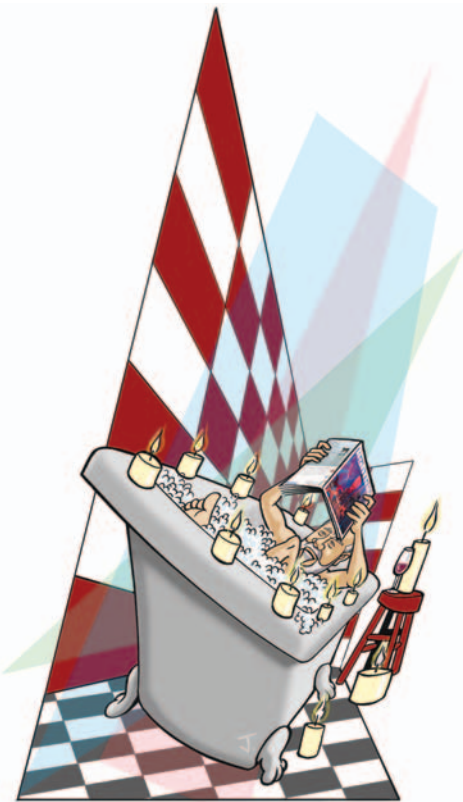
Online turnoff

It's strange where the mind takes you in those moments when it's not chained down by the mundane business of earning a living. And thus I am surprised to find myself being drawn to Ayn Rand's famous architect Howard Roark in *The Fountainhead*.

It's unlikely to have anything to do with Rand's presentation of a man who refuses to accept any compromise to his view of the world, and much more to do with that scene in the film where Gary Cooper stares at the telephone, waiting for it to ring. That, and the odd fact that I'm wandering round the house humming "Hallelujah, I'm a Bum".

But as we know, the marketing department finds work for idle hands, so it's off to visit my website designer. I tend towards the 'if it ain't broke...' line of thinking so perhaps I haven't paid as much attention to the doings of the e-community as I should have done. And while I've been busy suggesting alternative viewpoints to electricians and quantity surveyors, stuff has been going on.

It has been gently explained to me



I can read a newspaper or a magazine in all kinds of strange places, and it's nobody's business but mine"

that I have been lax on the e-front of things and that I need to shape-up and get myself connected. Regular blogs are needed, and profiling and links and all sorts of other business that I didn't bother writing down, but without which I am doomed to endure a solitary existence – a disembodied spirit howling through the streets.

I am also sure that, were I to address all the needs of my website, I would have to employ a lighting designer so I could spend all of my time uploading and working those connections.

And it's not just my own website. Even here, within this august organ, my print self is reduced to a page designed mainly to satisfy DDA compliance, with the rest of my finely-tuned arguments being sacrificed to the blogosphere – a place, I am told, where readers make regular visits, even "bookmark the page in their Favourites folder" – whatever that means.

Maybe it's just the grumpiness coming out in me, but I like paper. I can read a newspaper or a magazine in all kinds of strange places, and it's nobody's business but mine. I'm not likely to haul my coal-fired CRT monitor down the stairs and into the sitting room so that I can lie on the sofa to find out everyone's latest doings.

Maybe it's because I see computers as a source of important information – a very neat, tidy and fast method of communication – but I read magazines and newspapers for fun and learning. My computer is not fun. There, I've said it, and even before I finish the sentence, I'll be **John Bullock**

Read John's regular blog at www.lighting.co.uk

