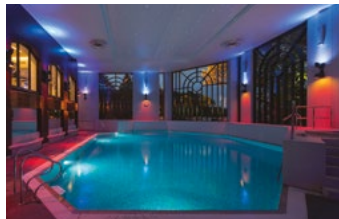




## Crowne Plaza Gerrards Cross

**ACCOMMODATION** If you're looking for somewhere to stay overnight – or a conveniently located meeting place – before flying out from Heathrow then this hotel could be for you. Twenty minutes away from both the airport and Marylebone station, the four-star hotel at the base of the Chiltern Hills offers great service in beautiful surroundings. Previously The Bellhouse hotel, the Crowne Plaza Gerrards Cross opened its doors last September following a £20m refurbishment. BMW Group subsidiary Designworks was commissioned to create a new meeting and events space. The 650sqm area includes two large, flexible conference and banqueting spaces seating up to 350 and 260 people respectively, six meeting rooms, a Creative Attic, breakout bar and landscaped gardens. Between meetings you can enjoy a drink or delicious signature dishes at the 1269 restaurant and bar or be pampered at the Wave Spa and Wellness Centre. If those appointments really overrun, then check into one of the 138 comfy and spacious bedrooms for a well-earned night's sleep. *Behiye Hassan*



[cp-gerrardscross.co.uk](http://cp-gerrardscross.co.uk)

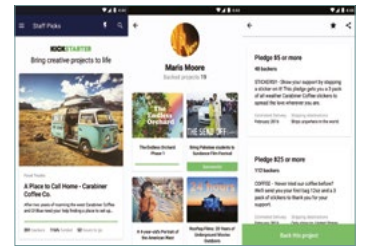
## Kickstarter app for Android



**TECH** Some three years after crowdfunding platform Kickstarter launched its app for iOS, the version for patient Android users is here.

If you're trying to get a new venture financed, this can only be a good thing – details of your project can reach a yet wider audience and you now have a user-friendly, on-the-go way to check on how much investment you've attracted so far. Beware, though, that this first incarnation (*Director* tested version 1.0) does not allow you to manage your projects via the app – for now you'll have to head back to the desktop version to do that. Apart from that, what's not to like? Those hunting for the next big thing to invest in can take advantage of Kickstarter's activity feed for ideas and also find out what friends have been putting their hard-earned cash into. It's also a handy tool for researching particular markets – and, best of all, it's free. *Chris Maxwell*

Available from the Google Play store. For more information visit [kickstarter.com](http://kickstarter.com)



CREATING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE



## Creating Competitive Advantage Kevin Uphill

**BOOKS** Until recently, having a competitive advantage

over your rivals meant running an enticing customer loyalty scheme. But today, when a small San Francisco car service can radically transform the global taxi industry in just five years, offering unique value is more important than ever. It's a theme Kevin Uphill, chairman of business sales specialist Avondale, examines in his third book. Success, he argues, is no longer down to talent, luck or a charismatic CEO. Instead brave business decisions, tapping into

the zeitgeist, having an innovative outlook and being able to anticipate trends through environmental scanning and data analysis are more effective business tools. Using pertinent examples of competitive ingenuity throughout (such as Niki Lauda, whose micro-planning meant he was a more successful F1 driver than flashier James Hunt), Uphill is particularly strong at distilling why the likes of Gillette, easyJet and Dyson all prosper and Kodak failed, with plenty of take-home advice for younger companies too. *Christian Koch*

[koganpage.com](http://koganpage.com)



## MEETING AND EATING

### Le Lobby, Peninsula Paris

When in need of sustenance in the City of Light, head for the lobby of the Peninsula hotel, one of the Paris business community's best-kept lunch secrets. Formerly The Majestic hotel – Gershwin composed *An American in Paris* here – it became the Unesco office after the war before being closed to the public in 1955. Its six-year journey back to life began in 2009 and Le Lobby restaurant itself took 18 months of painstaking work – but the result is a light, bright space and the food is sublime. I opted for the light but plentiful Naturally Peninsula menu, starting with tuna sashimi with niçoise salad, followed by a main of scallops with watercress, and finishing with berries. Le Lobby is worth visiting whether you want to impress a client or merely be inspired by its soaring ceilings – and be well fed in the process. *Lysanne Currie*



[paris.peninsula.com](http://paris.peninsula.com)