

# Pallet Control Software

## Are You Maximising Your Options?

Pallet control software is often overlooked and in reality, the software you choose will dramatically impact the effectiveness of your operation. With free software on offer and paid software being relatively inexpensive, selecting the right product can be rewarding. So, which should you choose? Let's lay it out for you here.

# Why is Pallet Control Software Important?

Because pallets and containers deliver efficiency and reduced handling they are widely used across a range of industries and in almost all supply chains.

The sheer volume and potential for loss sees many manufacturers and transport providers expending large amounts of time and effort keeping track of their every move. Which is critical if they are to avoid costly hire fees and paying for pallets they no longer have.

It is estimated that there are nearly 140 million pallets in the Australian market. The latest CSCL Australian Pallet Survey addressed one of the largest concerns of pallet users related to pallet control, with over 40% of respondents detailing the management of pallet inventory and the loss of pallets were of major concern.<sup>1</sup>

This is where pallet control software steps in, using cutting-edge technology to quickly capture data, provide you with a comprehensive overview of your pallet inventory and manage communications with CHEP and Loscam.<sup>2</sup>

## Free vs. Paid: Navigating the Field

Which pallet control software will work best depends on what your organisation is looking for. Some companies choose to stick with free customer portals and use two separate programs to key transfers and IOUs while others choose consolidated paid software to reconcile invoices and produce reports.

Either way, there are benefits and drawbacks for both options - so let's dive right into it.

### Free Software: Cost-effective Technology

Pallet hire giants, CHEP and Loscam both provide free, web-based software designed to manage their own equipment.

If your organisation uses only one equipment type and deals with your pallet management in-house, free products can be a cost-effective and seamless way to manage pallet hire.

While CHEP and Loscam's pallet control platforms offer virtually the same features, the one you choose will largely depend on the hire company you work with. This is one of the pitfalls of free software, as they can only be used to track CHEP or Loscam pallets respectively.

### myCHEP

The myCHEP customer portal<sup>3</sup> simplifies administrative tasks and streamlines the tasks that often come with pallet pooling. Easy to use, the platform allows customers to access and manage accounts on multiple devices, simplifying transactions in just a few clicks.

Only available for CHEP customers, some features of this platform include:

- ▶ **Mobile Entry.** Never feel limited by your location. Access your account on the go using your smartphone or tablet.
- ▶ **Calendar View.** Create, modify and cancel orders using one screen. The calendar function allows you to view, plan and track orders, just like your Outlook calendar.
- ▶ **Customised Dashboard.** Personalise the way you see orders and items. With myCHEP you can set-up your dashboard anyway you want.
- ▶ **Express Orders.** Emergencies happen, but with myCHEP you can be prepared for them. Place orders under the standard order lead time and track its status through the platform with ease.
- ▶ **Invoice Management.** Dealing with operations in-house? Easily track the status of invoices through your custom dashboard.
- ▶ **Manage Data.** Download your reports on any device and export, sort or filter your data.
- ▶ **24/7 Access.** log in anytime, anywhere and manage your accounts 24 hours, 7 days a week.

1. Centre for Supply Chain and Logistics Australian Pallet Survey 2017 Report

2. What are CHEP & Loscam?

3. myCHEP



## Loscam Online

Investing in developments to assist their customers in accessing the latest equipment movements, Loscam strives to continually improve the customer experience through their Hire Management System (HMS) and Loscam Online (LOL).<sup>4</sup>

Created exclusively for Loscam customers these programs offer a range of benefits including:

- ▶ **Multiple Accounts.** Managed by one nominated administrator, it can accommodate multiple users. Training and support can be provided by the Loscam Customer Service team.
- ▶ **Internet-Enabled Program.** 100% secure, this password-protected program allows you to safely share customer data and information.
- ▶ **Equipment Management.** Effectively track all Loscam hire equipment movements and document all equipment flows through your facility through a user-defined software application.
- ▶ **Manage Invoices.** View live transfers, including future invoices and search up past invoices to cross-check them.

- ▶ **Facilitated Access.** Access invoices, statements, account balances, transactions, dockets and account analysis graphs and data.
- ▶ **24/7 Access.** Loscam Online's internet portal system offers a system that can process transfers, IOUs and other transactions every day of the week.

## Paid Software: Streamline and Optimise

There are plenty of reasons why paid software is often the better option. These options tend to be more user-friendly and can also provide full integration to both CHEP and Loscam equipment management platforms.

Offering a range of features, the two most prominent options in the market today are PalletWatch and 2ic Pallets - but how are they different and what can they bring to the table when it comes to pallet management?

### PalletWatch

PalletWatch<sup>5</sup> is a third-party online platform that can help operations with pallet management of all sizes across Australia. Offering automatic import and export to CHEP

4. Loscam HMS & LOL

5. PalletWatch



and Loscam, this real-time online software embraces the latest technology in pallet control.

Supplying users with unlimited access, free upgrades and low annual fees — PalletWatch is one of Australia's leading pallet control software options, boasting a range of additional features including:

- ▶ **Cloud-Based System.** Easy to access, this single database makes contacting your trading partners and keeping track of transactions simple.
- ▶ **Automated Reconciliation.** Invoices are reconciled automatically with the data keyed into the software.
- ▶ **Automated Export and Imports.** Import and export automatically with CHEP and Loscam.
- ▶ **Automated Communication.** Send automated emails for rejections and corrections to CHEP and Loscam, and cc your trading partners.

## 2ic Software

With 2ic<sup>6</sup> you can prevent loss and streamline the pallet management process in your facility. With full functionality to import transactions from a warehouse and transport management system, or the ability to create them directly in 2ic Pallets and send them to the receiver, you can streamline your processes with this paid software.

2ic offers a range of benefits such as:

- ▶ **Automated Reconciliation.** Invoices are reconciled automatically with data keyed into the software.
- ▶ **Allocate Costs.** Import invoices for automatic reconciliation and export transactions to pallet companies.
- ▶ **Set Your Data Flow.** Set up a custom data flow for packaging transactions recorded in a warehouse or transport management system.

# So...

## How Do They Stack Up?

Deciding between free and paid software can be a tricky decision. While they each offer a range of benefits, they also come with certain limitations.

Depending on your operation, one feature may be more advantageous than another, so it's important to evaluate what your operation needs before investing in a particular software.

Feature	myCHEP	Loscam Online	2ic Software	Pallet-Watch
<b>Access and Support</b>				
Free with equipment hire	✓	✓		
Unlimited users	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unlimited sites and locations	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dashboard analytics	✓			✓
Free online training	✓	✓	✓	✓
Automatic backups	✓	✓	✓	✓
No hardware investment required, just an internet browser	✓	✓	✓	✓
Single login for multiple accounts	✓	✓		✓
Web access	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mobile App				
Desktop installation available			✓	
Phone Support	✓	✓	✓	✓
Email Support	✓	✓	✓	✓
LiveChat Support			✓	✓

Feature	myCHEP	Loscam Online	2ic Software	Pallet-Watch
<b>Transfer Management</b>				
Integration to CHEP	✓		✓	✓
Integration to Loscam		✓	✓	✓
Import from CHEP	✓ Auto		✓ Manual	✓ Auto
Export to CHEP	✓ Auto		✓ Manual	✓ Auto
Import from Loscam		✓ Auto	✓ Manual	✓ Auto
Export to Loscam		✓ Auto	✓ Manual	✓ Auto
View live transfers	✓	✓		
Multiple equipment items on single docket	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multiple suppliers on single docket			✓	
Barcode generated with docket	✓	✓	✓	✓
View several dockets at once	✓	✓	✓	✓
Automatic reconciliation	✓		✓	✓
Manage trade agreement/rules	✓	✓	✓	✓
IOU and PTA management			✓	✓
Record stock take	✓	✓	✓	✓
Search docket by reference number	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multiple filter list of dockets	✓			✓
Bulk transfer import			✓	✓
Add private and internal note on transfers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Attach POD and other files to transfers	✓			✓

Feature	myCHEP	Loscam Online	2ic Software	Pallet-Watch
<b>Trading Partner Management</b>				
Add in a trading partner account when creating a docket	✓		✓	✓
Search unknown trading partner by account number	✓	✓		✓
Search for trading partner by name				✓
Universal update of trading partner details	✓	✓		✓
Email trading partner directly from the software			✓	✓
<b>Reports</b>				
Report on unlimited equipment types			✓	✓
Invoice files stored within software	✓	✓		✓
Comprehensive pallet reports	✓		✓	✓
Export reports to excel	✓			✓

## Which is Best for Your Operation?

Choosing the right pallet software for your operation requires research and a thorough understanding of what features will help your pallet controller manage your pallets as they flow through your facility.

Only use either CHEP or Loscam equipment? Then their free software may be a suitable solution for your organisation.

Is your supply chain more complex? Then maybe investing some capital in a paid software can see your operation getting a better handle on pallet management.

► **Why 2ic.** This South Australian family owned business has been the pillar of third-party pallet software for almost 20 years. It is the only product reviewed that can be installed on a device within your own hosted environment and a key standout is the quality of financial reporting. 2ic provides a high level of customer service and post-sales support.

► **Why PalletWatch.** No need for installation, multiple pallet accounts across sites and a global search function makes this product highly attractive for those users managing multiple accounts. The pricing model further lends itself to multi-site accounts and retail outlets. Written for pallet control by pallet control, PalletWatch shares our ethos of 'simple'.



## Other paid software features

2ic and PalletWatch offer features not available through myCHEP and Loscam Online. With 2ic, you are able to install the software on a device or within your own hosted environment. They also offer a high level of customer service and post-sales support. 2ic has a stable base of trading partners and solid financial reporting.

PalletWatch allows multiple pallet accounts across sites. This makes it ideal for large retailers or a 3rd party logistics provider. Their highly automated process may be a feature that is attractive for some businesses.

## Want to Change or Upgrade Your Pallet Control Software?

When hiring pallets, the key to a successful operation lies in choosing your pallet control software.

By selecting an accessible system, you can easily hand over pallet management with little to no complications. Whether your pallet controller is moving on to a new role or taking

a month long sabbatical, setting up their replacement with a user-friendly pallet control software makes for a seamless transition.

## Need help? Get in touch with Precise Pallet Management

We understand how important finding the right software can be. At Precise Pallet Management (PPM), we use myCHEP, Loscam Online, 2ic and PalletWatch to track pallets, communicate with CHEP and Loscam, correct and reject transfers, import trading partners and more.

If you're struggling with pallet recovery or drowning in pallet loss, our highly motivated team can get you back on track in no time.

**Want to learn more about how Precise Pallet Management can help improve your company's supply chain? Get in touch with us today!**

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