



# TIP SHEET

MODEL: PALLETPAL 360 v. the imitator  
 TIP SHEET NO. 85 DATE ISSUED: JAN. 2016 REVISED:

In today's world, the biggest risk of developing great products is that copycats will certainly arrive at their earliest opportunity. In the case of PalletPal, the patent expired a few years ago and after more than 25 years of experience and evolving refinements, The PalletPal Level Loader, now has an imitator from an overseas source that has record of unsuccessful knock-offs and international trade sanctions. Copying is bad enough but compromising the proven design as a result of inexperience or simply to cheapen its cost, is truly unfortunate. We recently analyzed a knock-off to determine its actual similarity to PalletPal. This paper presents some of the facts to be considered before trying to determine its actual interchangeability with the original.

Feature	Imitation	PalletPal 360	Comment
<u>Springs:</u>	Coiled springs	Calibrated springs	<b>The heart of the performance of a level loader is the calibrated springs.</b> Tests on the imitation unit revealed some significant inconsistencies in compression rates and the ability of the springs to return to their original, full design height even after just a few test cycles. These under specified springs will result in the unit not calibrated to the load and not returning to the full height when empty. Due to this lack of calibration and clear evidence of premature fatigue, we would be anecdotally concerned about the actual material composition and structural longevity. <b>After installing tens of thousands of calibrated springs without a product or performance failure, we know that PalletPal provides uncompromising performance today and for a lifetime...In fact, we guarantee it.</b>
<u>Warranty:</u>	One year	Lifetime	Southworth offers its parts and labor coverage for the <b>life of the product</b> . Southworth will even pay the freight both ways should the PalletPal need to be returned. After sale service and post warranty coverage for the knock-off should be fully determined.
<u>Weldment:</u>	Compromised	Proven	Although the overall appearance is similar, close inspection revealed the structural load supporting members of the imitation were made with thinner material. We also found areas lacking a full complement of weld These things are not structurally acceptable. The result will mean a less stable assembly and over time overstressed metal might fail. We know of many 25 year old PalletPals still providing dependable daily service.
<u>Rotating ring:</u>	Unevenly supported	<b>Evenly supported</b>	Measurements taken on the imitation unit showed that not only was the platform under the rotating ring not level, but the bearings supporting the rotating ring were out of plumb up to 1/2". This produced a wobbly, out of level rotator ring. This condition will negatively impact rotation performance and overload the bearings actually carrying the weight which will lead to bearing failures.
<u>Uneven loads:</u>	Unstable & tippy	Steady and plumb	Although load levelers are to be evenly loaded or unloaded, (working in layers) in the real world loads can be become lopsided and eccentric. For the reasons mentioned above, the imitation unit deflects as much as 2" side-to-side with just a 20% offset load. This condition can also occur when the pallet is not centered. The PalletPal is level under same conditions.

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Imitation</b>	<b>PalletPal 360</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<u>Moving w/Load:</u>	Marginal	Okay	Because of the lack of structural integrity mentioned above moving a loaded imitation unit could be a problem; especially if the unit is not fully compressed or the load is tall. A PalletPal can be moved loaded because the base, legs and platform will remain stable even under extreme or unusual load conditions.
<u>Spring locks:</u>	No	Yes	Each spring bayonet on the PalletPal is fitted with special locking device that confirms the bayonet is in place and fully engaged. It prevents any possibility of the bayonet moving allowing the spring to loosen and the platform falling. There is no provision on the imitation. This is a safety device which should not have been deleted.
<u>Initial Cost:</u>	Less	More	Entry to market for knock-offs is almost always price and this is true here. Based on the above information the old adage, "You will get what you pay for" has never been truer.
<u>Indirect Cost:</u>	More	Less	The old saying is, "You can pay for it now, or pay for it later" Beyond the obvious costs the problem with unreliable or undependable equipment is the interruptions to business operations and productivity can be very expensive.

Customizing PalletPal allows getting the most productivity for your investment dollar. Whether it's just portability to move it easily around a crowded work station (or share with another work station) a special top to support odd sized pallets or a special finish to extend its appearance and useful service life these accessories make the most of your company's money.

<b>Accessories and Options</b>	<b>Imitation</b>	<b>PalletPal 360</b>
Load Range 0 (for loads under 400 lbs.)	Not available	Available, in stock
Ship assembled (springs installed)	Not available	Available, in stock
Adjustable feet (for uneven floors)	Not available	Available, stock to 1 week
Aluminum riser step (for taller loads)	Not available	Available, in stock
Phenolic ring cover and finger guard	Not available	Available, in stock
Welded steel disc cover (for odd sized pallets)	Not available	Available, stock to 1 week
Custom square or rectangular platforms	Not available	Available, 1-2 week lead time
Rotator ring lock (for holding load in position)	Not available	Available, in stock
Portability set – Casters (for ease of movement)	Not available	Available, 1-2 week lead time
Portability set – Semi-live with skid spotter	Not available	Available, 1-2 week lead time
Portability set – 6 wheel (center steer)	Not available	Available, 1-2 week lead time
Bellows accordion skirting	Not available	Available, 1-2 week lead time
Bellows safety skirting (meets ANSI standards)	Not available	Available, 4 week lead time
Special finish – two part epoxy (any color)	Not available	Available, 1-2 week lead time
Special finish – ZRC™ epoxy	Not available	Available, 1-2 week lead time
Special finish – Steel-it™ epoxy	Not available	Available, 1-2 week lead time
Galvanized PalletPal (hot dipped)	Not available	Available, in stock
Stainless Steel PalletPal	Not available	Available, in stock